

Hekmatyar extends truce, but siege to stay

JALALABAD (AP) — Renegade Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar agreed Tuesday to extend a ceasefire in the civil war. But he also vowed to maintain a blockade that has prevented food from reaching Kabul, the capital. Food stocks are desperately low in Kabul, and agencies say supplies are needed urgently to feed more than 200,000 people driven from their homes by heavy fighting between the factions. Mr. Hekmatyar said he would allow the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross to bring food supplies from neighbouring Pakistan up to the outskirts of Kabul, which he controls along with his ally, warlord Rashid Dostum. Mr. Hekmatyar said Kabul residents would be allowed to come into his areas and pick up food. But he said he would not allow food shipments to go into the capital, which is controlled by his arch rival, President Burhanuddin Rabbani. Mr. Hekmatyar and General Dostum launched a ferocious assault against the president's forces Jan. 1, but have been unable to make inroads into the capital.

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CIA agent accused of spying

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A high-ranking Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) agent and his wife were arrested Tuesday and accused of spying for Russia and the former Soviet Union, the Justice Department said. Aldrich Ames and his wife Maria del Rosario Casas Ames were arrested and taken for a hearing before a federal magistrate, U.S. officials said. Mr. Ames, who had been head of the Soviet branch in the agency's counterintelligence group, was accused of passing on secrets about CIA operations and agents. Mr. Ames and his wife fled for the Soviet Union since 1985 and after its collapse kept spying for Russia until his arrest, officials said. The couple had been paid \$1.5 million, officials said. Attorney General Janet Reno said the case was "extremely serious." Ms. Ames, 52, and his wife, 41, were accused of leaving government secrets in "dead drops" in and around Washington to be picked up by KGB agents. They kept cash payments in Swiss bank accounts.

Attas leaves for home

AMMAN (Petra) — Yemeni Prime Minister Haider Abu Bakr Al Attas left Amman for home Wednesday morning following a several-day visit during which he attended the signing of the Yemeni reconciliation accord in Amman Sunday. Mr. Attas was seen off at the airport by Prime Minister Abdullah Salam Al Majali and other officials.

Egypt, Jordan hold economic talks

AMMAN (Petra) — Egyptian Minister of Industry and Trade Mahmoud Mohamed El Mahgoub arrived here Tuesday on a four-day official visit to Jordan during which he will chair the Egyptian side to the Joint Jordanian Egyptian Economic Committee which meets here today. In an arrival statement, Mr. Mahgoub said he would hold economic and commercial talks with senior Jordanian officials and would also sign with his Jordanian counterpart Rima Khalaf a commercial protocol defining list of commodities to be exchanged by both countries.

FIS leaders freed from jail

ALGERIA (AFP) — Two leaders of the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) were freed from prison, the APS news agency reported Tuesday, citing the public prosecutor in Blida. The two were identified as Ali Djeddi, in charge of the fundamentalist movement's political relations, and Abdul Kader Boukham, a member of the FIS's executive supreme council. They were sentenced to four years in prison each for threatening state security and had been detained at the Blida military prison since June 1991. The agency did not say why the two were released before the end of their terms (French fears, page 10).

Iran says helicopter landed in Iraq

NICOSIA (R) — Iran said on Tuesday an Iranian helicopter had made an emergency landing in northern Iraq and Tehran had asked Baghdad for information on the fate of the two crew members. A Foreign Ministry spokesman, quoted by the Iranian news agency IRNA, said the helicopter disappeared three days ago after the pilot reported technical failure. "The spokesman called to the Iraqi government to provide information on the helicopter's whereabouts," IRNA said. "We are not sure if the helicopter landed in Iraq or not," he said. "We are not sure if the helicopter landed in Iraq or not," he said. "We are not sure if the helicopter landed in Iraq or not," he said.

Israel population up to 5.3 million

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel's population grew to over 5.3 million in 1993, the central bureau of statistics announced Tuesday. The population of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip went from 105,000 in 1992 to 115,000 last year, the bureau said in a statement. The Palestinian population in the occupied territories is pegged around 1.9 million. Israel's population at the end of 1993 stood at 5,325 million, the statement said, compared to 5,306 million a year earlier. The population growth rate is 2.5 per cent, down slightly from 2.7 per cent the year before. The statement said 60 per cent of the growth came from the birth rate and 40 per cent from immigration.

Iran increases Rushdie bounty

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Iranian foundation on Tuesday increased its \$2 million reward to \$3 million for information leading to the arrest of Salman Rushdie, the British author. "If people link this area directly in one way or another to the arrest of Rushdie, we will get an additional reward," the foundation said. "We are discussing the issue on principle," Mr. Asfour said. "We hope to reach an agreement on this subject soon." Egypt's Middle East News

Russia blocks wider ultimatums in Bosnia

BONN (Agencies) — Diplomats agreed Tuesday to push the Bosnian factions towards a peace settlement to divide Bosnia into ethnic states, but could not agree on extending cease-fire ultimatums to other parts of the country. The senior diplomats from the United States, Russia and Western Europe will work to extend the Sarajevo truce model to other beleaguered Bosnian towns and cities, but with a crucial difference — no new threats, at least for now. Russia said it would not tolerate a wider extension of the National Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ultimatum that forced Bosnian Serbs to withdraw their artillery from around Sarajevo, two European officials said after the meeting.

After that impasse, Western diplomats agreed efforts should be focused on getting Bosnia's Muslims, Serbs and Croats to work out a peaceful division of the former Yugoslav republic, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity. In a joint statement, the diplomats said they would seek to improve the humanitarian situation in Serb-besieged enclaves and push Muslims and Croats to stop fighting in the southwestern city of Mostar and in central Bosnia. They also said they would insist that Bosnian Serbs not move any of the artillery pulled back from Sarajevo to other

war fronts. Among those taking part in the meeting were Russian Deputy Foreign Minister and envoy for Yugoslavia Vitaly Churkin, Assistant U.S. Secretary for European Affairs Stephen Oxman and the U.S. special envoy for Yugoslavia, Charles Redman. "The U.S., Russia and the European Community want to work together" on the Bosnia question, Mr. Churkin said, after the meeting which analysts said confirmed the return of Russia to the diplomatic front line on the issue. Moscow has proposed an international conference of the leading Western powers and Russia on Bosnia, but Mr. Churkin said whether Tuesday's meeting would lead to such a conference was up to ministers. Mr. Churkin told reporters: "We know now what we are doing, we are acting together."

Bosnian Serbs abandoned some artillery around Sarajevo when they pulled their heavy weapons out, U.N. officials said. Near Tuzla, north of Sarajevo, five Swedish peacekeepers were wounded when their three armoured personnel carriers were attacked with mortars and small arms and one vehicle took a direct hit, Swedish TV reported. The Swedes, three of them seriously wounded, were evacuated by helicopter from Ribnica to the Norwegian field hospital in Tuzla. Swedish radio said.

U.N. peacekeepers continued efforts Tuesday to control the remaining Serb guns, and diplomats turned up the heat for a political settlement in the nearly two-year-old war. U.N. tanks and a humanitarian convoy headed for Tuzla Tuesday after the United Nations vowed to reopen the city's airport to help relieve the stricken Muslim population. But the prospect of the airport reopening without the consent of the Bosnian Serbs besieging the town brought an immediate warning of a strong reaction from the rump Yugoslavia. Kofi Annan, the chief of U.N. peacekeeping operations, announced in New York Monday that the huge Tuzla airport would reopen on March 7, following the neutralising of Bosnian Serb heavy weapons around Sarajevo at the weekend. "The U.N. and NATO have decided to strike while the iron is hot," commented a U.K. officer here, who declined to be identified. Tuzla airport has been closed by Bosnian Serb gunners since May 1992, but U.N. troops backed by air support could be used to reopen it if necessary following discussions with the parties on the ground, U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali has told the Security Council.

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(Continued on page 5)

Beidh mounts diplomatic drive after clashes at home

SANAA (Agencies) — Southern officials mounted a diplomatic drive on Tuesday in the Gulf, after troop clashes at home which claimed at least eight lives despite a reconciliation accord between Yemen's rival leaders. Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh, a southerner, met King Fahd in the Saudi capital, while his deputy Salem Saleh Mohammed met the Kuwaiti emir, Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, and called for ties to be restored. They were the first such high-level visits since the 1991 Gulf war, when the conservative monarchies accused Yemen of siding with Iraq and Kuwait broke off relations. Mr. Beidh later travelled to Oman while Mr. Saleh Mohammed went to the United Arab Emirates, where he said the tour was aimed at drumming up support for Yemen after the reconciliation signed on Sunday in Amman by Mr. Beidh and President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a northerner. Referring to the clashes

which have erupted since the deal, the envoy called on "all parties concerned to help remedy the situation and allow the return of stability." But an Arab diplomat here, declining to be named, warned that the Beidh initiative could backfire and "aggravate the crisis of confidence between the president and his deputy." But other sources said President Saleh and Vice-President Beidh both moved to end the fighting. "President Saleh and Vice-President Beidh gave instructions to contain the incident and carry out a quick investigation of its ramifications," the spokesman told Yemen's official SABA news agency. "The regrettable incident has been contained," he added. Mr. Beidh is still refusing to return to Sanaa from his southern base of Aden, where he has taken refuge since last August, an official in the president's General People's Congress (GPC) said. He said the vice-president

was demanding the arrest and trial of those responsible for the series of political assassinations since the country united in May 1990, most of which have targeted Mr. Beidh's Yemen Socialist Party (YSP). Since Friday, fighting between rival Yemen troops has killed at least eight soldiers and created an "explosive" situation which could run out of control, diplomatic and Defence Ministry sources said. Seven died in two separate clashes in the south on Monday, the day after the Amman accord calling for major economic, political and military reforms. Another soldier was killed in fighting near Aden airport on Friday. A Yemeni official said in Amman northern troops on Tuesday ambushed and killed 15 soldiers from the south. The ambush was sprung by a northern brigade at Al Amaliqa, based in the Abyan region of southern Yemen, the South Yemeni official said. (Continued on page 5)

Israel and PLO hammer out details of security agreement

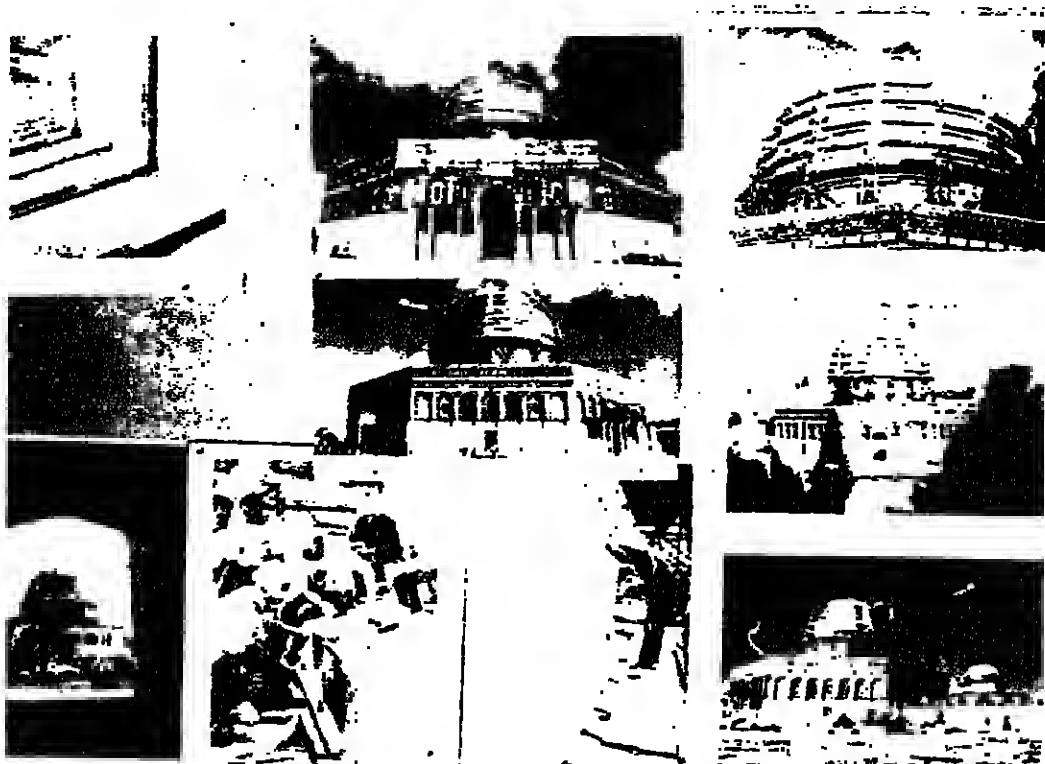
CAIRO (Agencies) — Israeli and Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) negotiators, hoping to reach agreement within two weeks on implementing their peace pact, debated security issues in talks Tuesday in Cairo. Hassan Asfour, a member of the Palestinian delegation, told reporters that discussions focus on where Palestinian police posts will be located and how joint Palestinian-Israeli patrols will be carried out in the Gaza Strip and on roads linking Gaza to Jericho. The Palestinians reportedly are seeking a force of 10,000 police, while Israel has insisted the size be held to 6,000 men. Mr. Asfour declined comment on reports that Israel will release some Palestinian prisoners on "Eid Al Fitr." "We are discussing the issue on principle," Mr. Asfour said. "We hope to reach an agreement on this subject soon." Egypt's Middle East News

Agency said that in addition to seeking freedom for some 3,400 Palestinian prisoners by mid-July, the Palestinians are demanding the repatriation of 68 people deported by Israel during the Palestinian uprising against occupation. The issue of releasing prisoners is critical because PLO leader Yasser Arafat has said he will not sign a final agreement with the Jewish state until he has a schedule for their freedom in hand. The talks, which began Monday, are expected to end with a new conference Wednesday. They will resume next week in the Egyptian resort of Taba, MENA said. A security committee headed by Nabil Shaath for the PLO and Amnon Shuhak for Israel has held four rounds of talks since Monday. Members are drafting a detailed agreement on security arrangements that would follow an Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho. Sources close to the talks said the security committee was working on a timetable for Israeli troops withdrawing, for dismantling Israeli military installations and deploying the Palestinian police. A separate group resumed work on details of transferring civilian authority from Israel to the PLO in Gaza and Jericho. The two sides have tried to impose a news blackout on the Cairo talks but Palestinian sources said the negotiations were close to agreement on civilian affairs. Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said the Cairo talks were making satisfactory progress, according to a report by Israeli army radio. Jameel Tarifi, head of the PLO team on civilian affairs, said agreement was reached on land registration on Monday. He said both sides were ex-

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(Continued on page 3)



Various phases of the restoration work at the Dome of the Rock (Petra photo)

Jordan welcomes Saudi campaign to raise funds for Jerusalem

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Tuesday warmly welcomed a decision by Saudi Arabia to launch a campaign to raise funds for the renovation of Islamic holy shrines in occupied Jerusalem as a constructive move taken during the Holy Month of Ramadan to help enhance the Arab and Islamic rights in the Holy City. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, made the statement during a visit to an exhibition at the King Abdullah Mosque featuring progress on the restoration of the Al Aqsa Mosque, the Dome of the Rock and other renovation projects undertaken by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs. His Majesty King Hussein and the Jordanian government and people view Saudi Arabia's decision with deep respect and appreciation, the Prince said, noting that Jordan had always been keen on maintaining close cooperation with Arab and Islamic governments to safeguard the holy places. The Saudi Press Agency reported Monday that King Fahd of Saudi Arabia issued instructions to Prince Salman, the Emir of Riyadh, to lead a drive through all regions of Saudi Arabia for donations that "will be channelled to rehabilitate and salvage the Islamic shrines in Holy Jerusalem." The Saudi step will enhance pan-Arab solidarity and re-

flects King Fahd's keenness on protecting the Islamic holy shrines in Jerusalem, Prince Hassan said. "We also view this decision as falling within the framework of a call made earlier this year by King Hussein urging the Arab and Islamic nations to protect their religious sites and assume their responsibility towards protecting the Arab and Islamic character of Jerusalem," he said. On Jan. 9, 1994, King Hussein named a Royal Commission for Jerusalem Affairs entrusting its members with the responsibility of rallying Arab and Islamic support to help keep Arab Jerusalem under Arab Islamic sovereignty.

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Fate of Zarqa municipal polls hangs in air

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Municipal elections for Jordan's second largest city could be postponed if a draft law on municipalities is passed before the deadline for announcing the polls falls on "around" Feb. 27, observers say. But Zarqa Deputy Bassam Omoush said it would not be possible to have the draft legislation signed into law before Feb. 27, adding that indications are the elections would be held on time.

Under the current regulations, people of Zarqa should go to the polls to elect a new municipal council on May 27 and the date for the elections should be announced by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Environment "around three months," before the term of the incumbent council ends. But under a new draft law on municipalities affairs, which is expected to be discussed by the Lower House of Parliament

next week, appointed committees would replace municipal councils whose terms end within three months from approving the new legislation until elections are held for the country's 167 municipal councils later this year, parliamentary sources said. Accordingly, observers said, the elected Islamist-dominated Zarqa Municipal Council could be replaced with an appointed committee.

Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Environment Ahmad Akaileh told the Jordan Times Tuesday that a decision on the Zarqa municipal elections will be made within the legal period. But he would not say if the decision would be to hold the polls or replace the council with an appointed committee. "We could announce a decision to hold the elections or not," he said. Mr. Akaileh said the draft law would settle the issue, adding that the new legislation addresses municipal elections

and that "new developments" could be created by it. Zarqa deputies have urged Mr. Akaileh to hold the municipal elections, expressing their rejection of having a committee run the affairs of the city whose population is estimated at over half a million. "It was appointed committees that destroyed the city because they were not elected and therefore not accountable to the electorate," said Dr. Omoush, member of the Islamic Action Front (IAF).

The deputies demanded in a letter they sent to the minister that the elections be held on schedule in compliance with the law. Zarqa Deputy Abdul Baqi Jammo said he signed the letter upon reports that an appointed committee was to replace the council Wednesday. But "after investigating the issue, I found out that the reports are not true," Mr. Jammo, president of the Judiciary Committee at the House, told the Jordan Times. "The country is celebrating

democracy and democracy means elections," Mr. Jammo said. The Muslim Brotherhood controls eight out of the nine municipal seats in Zarqa, which is considered a stronghold of Islamists. The IAF won the three Muslim parliamentary seats (out of four) allocated for the city in the Nov. 8 polls. Mr. Jammo, an independent Islamist, won the seat allocated for the Circassians and Chechen minorities.

Mr. Jammo said the Judicial Committee had recommended that the House amend the draft municipalities law to have direct mayoral elections instead of having them elected by the councils. He said it also recommended that two thirds of Amman municipality be elected and a third appointed by the government "so that experts can serve on the council." The draft law stipulates that half of Amman council be appointed by the government.

30, including Abu Nidal suspects, arrested

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Security authorities have arrested nearly 30 people, including 15 suspected members of the Abu Nidal group, after raiding an office allegedly used by the group as a front for its activities in Jordan, a security source said Tuesday. The arrests were the first in Jordan following revelations that the group was behind the Jan. 29 assassination of Jordanian diplomat Nayeb Imran Maaytah in Beirut. Mr. Maaytah was shot at close range by a gunman as he was driving out of his garage to work. Two of three suspects arrested in the case have confessed to complicity in the killing and identified the third as the gunman. Lebanese investigators have

informed the Jordanian government that the suspects were affiliated with the Abu Nidal group, which has denied any role in the killing. His Majesty King Hussein, without mentioning names, said a terrorist group based in an Arab capital was involved in the assassination. Libya, where reports suggest Abu Nidal is hiding, denied it had anything to do with the killing. According to the security source, the arrests of suspected members of Abu Nidal's Fateh Revolutionary Council (FRC) were made Sunday, one day after an office in Abdali was raided. Documents and leaflets belonging to the group were seized in the raid on the office, operating under the name "Asoud" the source said. The source confirmed that "the arrests were made in con-

nection with the Maaytah assassination," but declined to provide details of the affair or the nature of the charges the suspects may face. The source, which has proved accurate in the past, would not confirm or deny reports that the arrested suspects were planning a series of sabotage operations and the assassination of a "senior Palestinian figure." "Investigations are continuing, and any further assertions will be premature," said the source. The source, however, affirmed that at least 15 of those arrested were suspected Abu Nidal activists with a record of extremist actions in Jordan and had served prison terms during the 1970s. Abu Nidal, whose real name is Sabri Al Banna, broke away from the mainstream Fateh

group of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in 1973 and set up his own faction, which he named "Fateh Revolutionary Council" in the late 1980s. The group has been accused of dozens of violent attacks in the Middle East and in Europe, including the simultaneous 1986 attacks on Rome and Vienna airports which killed more than 20 people, as well as bombing of synagogues and other Israeli targets. The group is also accused of a series of attacks on Jordanian diplomats in Turkey, Italy, India and Romania. Abu Nidal was based in Iraq in the early 1980s before moving to Syria, Lebanon and then to Libya. But he is known to maintain clandestine presence in most Arab countries. (Continued on page 5)

Violence flares in Gaza City

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (Agencies) — Palestinians launched four attacks on the Israeli army on Tuesday wounding at least one Israeli soldier, as troops opened fire hitting three Palestinians, a correspondent reported. A grenade lobbed at a military post in the centre of Gaza City left one soldier hurt. Another grenade was thrown at the army base in the nearby Jabalia refugee camp without causing injuries. Two Palestinian photographers for AFP and Reuters were detained for an hour and had their films confiscated after taking photographs. The army charged they were in a closed military zone. Masked Palestinians also fired at troops outside the city's central jail and at a military administration car. No injuries were reported. Meanwhile, trouble flared at the Rafah camp on the border with Egypt where troops opened fire on stone-throwers and wounded one. Another was shot at Jabalia and a third at Beit Hanoun village in the north of the strip. Masked men killed a suspected collaborator overnight pumping six bullets into 28-year-old Haltham Abdul Latif Zakul's head and chest in Gaza City. No one claimed responsibility but activists of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) burnt his shop down a year ago. More than 20 Palestinians have been killed by fellow Palestinians for allegedly collaborating with Israel during February alone and more than 1,000 during the six years of the intifadah.

Aircraft deal adds financial pressure on Saudi Arabia

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Saudi Arabia will face no problem funding the purchase of nearly 50 U.S. aircraft but the deal will aggravate its financial difficulties caused by the Gulf war and low oil prices, bankers said.

The world's top crude producer and exporter chose U.S. jetliners in a deal worth nearly \$6 billion that involved strong competition between Boeing, McDonnell Douglas and the European Airbus Industries.

The U.S. Export-Import Bank is expected to finance 85 per cent of the deal, one of the biggest airline transactions in the history of the Middle East.

The remaining \$900 million will be obtained through loans from local or foreign banks, a Saudi banker told AFP.

"I do not see any problem for Saudi Arabia to finance that deal, since funds by the U.S. bank will be in long-term, soft-term loans. I don't think this is a problem for a country earning nearly \$4 billion a month. But it will put further pressure on its finances as it will push up debt."

Saudi Arabia ordered the planes as part of plans to modernise its entire fleet and replace planes from Boeing and McDonnell Douglas will visit Riyadh soon to negotiate details of the deal.

U.S. officials said last week the deal would create nearly 60,000 jobs in the aviation industry and another 120,000 in related businesses. President Bill Clinton said Washington had worked hard to win the contract over Airbus Industries, a joint venture of France, Britain and Germany.

Bankers said Saudi Arabia would easily obtain loans given its large oil reserves and production of eight million barrels per day. They said the Saudi economy was still strong despite budget and balance of payment deficits.

"Saudi Arabia is in a better position than many countries to get loans, foreign banks are aware of the Saudi resources," a Gulf banker said.

"Another thing is that it is the only developing nation that has not been classified by industrial states as a high risk country in lending activity as it is a major creditor to the International Monetary Fund (IMF)."

Saudi Arabia was the fifth biggest creditor to the Washington-based IMF before the Gulf war drained a large part of its reserves, from \$16.7 billion in 1989, its reserves with the IMF fell to \$11.6 billion in 1991 and were expected to have fallen to around \$6 billion in 1993.

Saudi Arabia paid nearly \$35 billion to finance a drive by a U.S.-led multinational coalition to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi occupation in early 1991. Its defence spending has also sharply risen since the war.

Such commitments have forced the kingdom to withdraw more from its overseas assets and borrow for the first time.

According to the Bahrain-based Arab Financial Corporation, Riyadh's debts are estimated at around \$17 billion, excluding military debt, mostly to the United States.

Another commitment is the financing of multi-billion dollar projects to increase its oil output capacity to 10 million bpd by 1995 and 12 million bpd by the year 2000 to face growth in world demand.

What complicates the situation is the decline in oil prices, which forced the kingdom to slash its 1994 budget by 18.7 per cent to 160 billion riyals (\$42.66 billion) from 196.9 billion riyals (\$52.5 billion) in 1993. But it still projects a deficit of around \$1.2 billion, which is far lower than the 1993 deficit of \$7.42 billion.

Oil prices were lower by around \$2 in 1993 compared with 1992 and \$20 compared with 1981 and they are expected to be weaker in 1994, according to Henry Azam, chief economist at the National Commercial Bank, the largest bank in Saudi Arabia.

He said the decline would push Saudi Arabia's oil revenues down to nearly \$36.1 billion in 1994 from \$45.5 billion in 1993 and more than \$100 billion in 1981, when its oil output exceeded 12 million bpd.

"Saudi Arabia has the potential to finance the aircraft deal but it is another financial burden," a Saudi banker said. "As there are no signs that oil prices will improve in the near future, you have to imagine the effects of accumulating debts on the kingdom."

British help new Palestinian police

AMMAN (R) — Britain, which gave the world the "bobby," is helping set up a Palestinian police force for the Gaza Strip and Jericho, a senior Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) official said on Monday.

"The British are supporting and giving assistance to the reorganisation of a future Palestinian police force in the areas of restructuring, communications, training and planning," said Mamdouh Noufal, member of a PLO police committee.

Mr. Noufal told Reuters a high-ranking team from the British police constabulary left for the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip after discussing police needs with PLO officials at their headquarters in Tunis in the first week of February.

Israel agreed to permit Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho under terms of an agreement signed by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel in Washington in September.

The Israeli pullout was to have begun in December but has been delayed while details are ironed out in further talks.

Britain promised assistance in setting up the police force during a visit by PLO chief Yasser Arafat in October. Aid includes reorganising shattered police academies in Gaza and Bethlehem.

Some 20 senior Palestinian police officers are due to arrive in Britain before April to prepare for running the academies.

"They promised providing sophisticated electronic equipment on border crossings between self-rule areas and Jordan and Egypt," Mr. Noufal said.

The PLO is pressing for a 20,000-member force, including five brigades with 60 armoured vehicles, to cover needs of the whole five-year self-rule period, not only for Gaza and Jericho.

Mr. Noufal said Israel was allowing only up to 6,000 lightly armed policemen for Gaza and the Jericho area.

The PLO estimates it will need \$120 million a year in running costs alone to keep a 10,000-strong police force and hopes international donors will help cover that.

Darawshe's visit to Damascus snagged over travel document

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Plans for an Israeli-Arab delegation to visit Syria are being held up by Syria's refusal to accept their Israeli passports, the parliament member leading the group said Tuesday.

Egypt had intervened to get Damascus to approve a visit by Parliament Member Abdul Wahab Darawshe at the head of a 40-member delegation to pay condolences to President Hafez Al Assad after the death of his son Basel in January.

Israeli leaders had acknowledged the Syrian permission for the delegation to come was a positive, if limited, step towards peace.

But the decision to reject the passports was likely to add to criticism of Syria's attitude towards peace, with Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on

Monday objecting to Syrian "intransigence" in the negotiations.

Mr. Darawshe told the Associated Press that Syria refused to allow them to enter through the Golan Heights at Quneitra or to use their Israeli passports as that would constitute recognition of the Jewish state and its control over land seized from Syria in 1967.

Mohammad Darawshe, spokesman for the legislator, said the Syrians did not want the trip seen as "normalisation."

Israel and Syria are formally at war but have been negotiating a peace settlement in Washington since 1991. Talks stalled over Syrian insistence that Israel commit to a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights before other issues are

discussed. Mr. Darawshe said the group was trying to arrange for temporary Egyptian or Jordanian travel documents. The kind Israeli Arabs often use to make the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, which also has no relations with Israel.

Mr. Darawshe said the documents might come through any day, allowing the trip to proceed.

Syria meanwhile protested that the Middle East peace negotiations were caught in a "vicious circle" because Israel refused to give up occupied Arab land.

"Syria will not continue these sterile negotiations indefinitely," the government newspaper Tishrin warned.

Iran holds wargames with Pakistan to boost sub power

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran, seeking to sharpen its new submarine forces, will start joint naval exercises in the Arabian Sea this week with neighbouring Pakistan, the first wargames the Islamic republic has ever held with another state.

The 10-day exercises will feature at least one of the two kilowatt diesel-electric submarines Iran has bought from Russia and are apparently designed to display the country's expanding naval forces and Tehran's potential naval reach.

Iran's navy commander, Rear Admiral Ali Shamkhani, told reporters in Tehran Monday that an unspecified number of Iranian destroyers were on their way to the Pakistani port of Karachi for the 10-day manoeuvres scheduled to begin Wednesday.

Iran's main surface warships are three World War II-era destroyers and five aging frigates bought from the United States and Britain in the 1970s. Not all are believed to be operational.

Tehran Radio, monitored in Nicosia, quoted Adm. Shamkhani as saying that the four-stage manoeuvres, under Pakistani command, would simulate "sinking enemy vessels in sea battles and joint

submarine operations." Iran is the only Gulf country to have submarine and this has caused alarm in the region. Washington also has expressed concern.

Adm. Shamkhani said the exercises, codenamed "Zulfikar" after the legendary sword of a Shiite Muslim hero, will be held in 10,360 square kilometres of Pakistani waters.

He added that joint naval exercises will be held alternately in Pakistan and Iran each year, the radio reported.

Iran is carrying out a major rearmament programme and has acquired advanced combat aircraft from Russia, missiles from North Korea and China, armour and artillery from Czechoslovakia and elsewhere.

Its armed forces have intensified their manoeuvres in recent months to absorb much of the new hardware.

Last month they staged a six-day exercise in the northern Gulf that included amphibious operations and tactical missile deployment.

The Iranian subs, which are reportedly equipped with surface-to-air missiles not found on Russian Kilos, are considered offensive weapons which the Iranians could use to choke the strait of Hormuz, the gate-

way to the Gulf through which one-third of the West's oil supplies pass.

They also could fulfil Iran's long-term ambition of projecting naval power as far as the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea.

Iran considers the Gulf its domain and resents the presence of foreign forces in the region.

The U.S. Navy has the largest presence with some 22 warships in the Gulf, the Red Sea and off Somalia. Britain and France also have warships in the region.

In the exercises with Pakistan, Iran "would be looking for the most basic kind of training, not sub-to-sub warfare which is still too advanced for the Iranians," said Captain Richard Sharpe, editor of the authoritative Jane's Fighting Ships.

"What the Iranians are looking for, and what the Pakistanis have experience in, is training subs to attack surface ships," he told the Associated Press in a telephone interview.

The Pakistanis have operated six French-built Daphne — and Agosta-class submarines since 1975 and are involved in military training in several Gulf states.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel to upgrade power supply to West Bank

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel will upgrade the electricity supply to 150 Arab villages in the occupied West Bank, despite uncertainty over who will control the area, Israeli energy minister announced Monday. "We are talking about tens of millions of dollars of investments," Minister Moshe Shahal told Israel Radio. Israel and the Palestinians are negotiating the introduction of autonomy to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho, expected to begin within the next few months. The autonomy will eventually extend to other parts of the West Bank, although the extent has yet to be negotiated. Last week Israeli and Palestinian negotiators agreed that Israel would continue to supply electricity to the autonomy. Mr. Shahal said the Palestinians may eventually want their separate electrical grid, but he said that would cost at least one billion dollars. The radio said the upgrade would include two new stations and two new gas turbines, and would cost up to \$250 million. Energy Ministry officials investigated the possibility of separating supply to Israeli settlements from Palestinian villages, but rejected it as too costly, the radio said. Israel is aiming for a shared grid between Israel, the Palestinian autonomy, Jordan and Egypt, Mr. Shahal said, because that was the most economical solution to electricity needs in the region.

Tantawi under fire for allegedly meeting Israelis

CAIRO (AFP) — Groups opposed to peace with Israel have launched a media campaign against the mufti of Egypt, accusing him of hosting a conference on the Middle East conflict attended by Israelis. Mufti Mohammad Sayed Tantawi denied in press comments Monday that he knew that Israelis had attended a conference he sponsored on trying to settle the conflict through psychological analysis. But the Al Arabi newspaper, mouthpiece of the Nasserist pan-Arab Party, quoted conference Chairman Gamal Madi Abul Azayem as saying Sheikh Tantawi had met all the participants, including the Israelis, at his office. Sheikh Tantawi is the most prominent religious figure in Egypt, along with the Al Azhar Muslim academy chairman, Sheikh Gad Al Haq Al Gad Al Haq. The Israeli delegation to the conference numbered 15 members and was headed by former Ambassador to Egypt Shimon Shamir, according to opposition sources. Columnist Fahmi Howaidi told AFP "the Islamic World will suffer a shock when it finds out that the mufti of Egypt met an Israeli delegation" in a Muslim site. He also said government censorship last week had prevented him from publishing an editorial to denounce the meeting. Although Egypt signed in 1979 a peace treaty with Israel, relations are almost restricted to official contacts.

Former Polish minister named Iran tribunal president

THE HAGUE (AP) — Former Polish Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski has been appointed president of the Iran-United States claims tribunal. The tribunal announced Monday that Mr. Skubiszewski succeeds former President Jose Maria Ruda of Argentina, effective Feb. 16. The 14-year-old tribunal has so far dealt with about \$3 billion in government-to-government and private commercial claims arising out of the Iranian revolution of 1979, consequent expropriations and broken contracts. Mr. Skubiszewski was named to his post by appointing authority Mr. Christopher M.J.A. Moons, a former Dutch supreme court chief justice. The appointing authority makes appointments when the tribunal judges — three Americans, three Iranians and three from other nations — cannot agree on a candidate. Tribunal rules dictate that the president, who rules on tribunal disputes and scheduling and chairs major hearings, be a third nation arbitrator chosen by the American and Iranian arbitrators. As president, Mr. Skubiszewski will also give the tribunal's authorization that payments be made to winning claimants. Mr. Skubiszewski joined the tribunal in December, after withdrawing his earlier bid for a seat on the International Court of Justice, the U.N.'s principal judicial arm.

Kuwait to fortify its border with Iraq

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait Defence Minister Sheikh Ali Al Salem Al Sabah was quoted on Tuesday as saying the emirate would build another earth rampart south of a ditch and rampart it has been digging along its newly-demarcated border with Iraq. "Sheikh Ali said another soil rampart will be created as soon as the border ditch digging is concluded," said Al Anbaa newspaper. The emirate started digging a ditch three metres deep and five metres wide along the 207 kilometres desert border last June. The ditch is meant to fortify the border and prevent people entering Kuwait illegally. (Sheikh Ali) said the area between the two soil ramparts will become a military zone. Al Anbaa said. Sheikh Ali, addressing Kuwaitis at a social gathering, gave no further details. Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990 and claimed the emirate as its 19th province. A multinational alliance led by the United States ejected Iraqi troops in February 1991. Iraqis have frequently crossed the border to smuggle goods or scavenge arms and military vehicles strewn over the Gulf war battlefields.

Russian threatens to fire on Tajik rebels

MOSCOW (AFP) — A Russian general threatened Monday to open fire on Tajik rebels if they continued attacks on posts on the Afghan border manned by Russian soldiers. General Alex Tymo, chief-of-staff, said Russian troops would be forced to react if Tajik rebels based in Afghanistan continued to fire on border posts in Tajikistan states, Interfax news agency reported. General Tymo said his troops would have to protect themselves. The Tajik government protested early Monday against recent rebel artillery bombardments from Afghanistan and said it reserved "the right to take adequate measures up to neutralise" the weapons.

Yemen fighting erupts as ink dries on peace deal

By Assem Abdul Mohsen
Reuters

SANAA — The ink had barely dried on a peace deal signed by Yemen's mismatched leaders when fighting erupted in the turbulent state Monday.

Yemen's dream of an enduring merger between a turbulent north steeped in the past and an extroverted, urbanised south relied on two men with little in common.

Colonel-turned President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his estranged deputy, Vice President Ali Salem Beidh, sign a national peace accord in Jordan on Sunday afternoon. It was meant to end more than six months of feuding that had paralysed Yemen and threatened to plunge it into civil war.

Few people believed there was any chance of success for the pact between northern military strongman Saleh and former Marxist apparition Beidh. The two men who engineered the merger of North

and South Yemen in May 1990.

By Monday afternoon troops and tanks from northern Yemen had surrounded the city of Zinjibar in the south, political and security sources said.

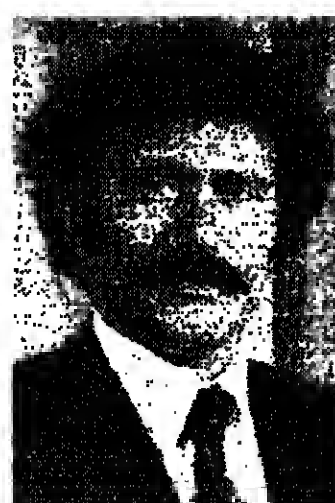
The two leaders headed home from Amman after long-range mediation efforts. Yemeni officials in the Jordanian capital said at least four people were earlier killed in a checkpoint clash between northern and southern soldiers who have not yet merged into a single army.

One Yemeni political source said of the two leaders: "It is a miracle they managed to work together at all in the early years of the union. They have little in common," one said.

"They are of a similar age (52 and 55 respectively) and have authoritarian backgrounds. Their ex-



Ali Salem Al Beidh



Ali Abdullah Saleh

periences, aims and political ideologies are far apart," said another.

Mr. Saleh's General People's Congress and Mr. Beidh's Yemen Socialist Party ruled unified Yemen jointly until general elections in April last year. An Islamist and ultra-conservative party, Islah,

emerged then as the third biggest in the country and was brought into the government despite strong socialist protests.

Mr. Beidh's party says more than 150 of its members have been killed since unification. It accuses the president's men of treating the merger as annexation.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	Ordi
18:00	N.B.A. sport
19:00	News in French
19:15	Le Journal De L'Hebdo
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	The End Of A Brave Man
21:30	The Circle For Children
22:00	News in English
22:30	Doc. "Forest Future"
23:15	Flight Into Hell
PRAYER TIMES	
06:49	Fajr
08:07	Sunrise (Summer) Doha
11:49	Dhuhr
15:00	Asr
17:30	Nightch
18:48	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifeth, Tel. 810746	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624591	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 625433	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824326	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 64195	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932	
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295	
WEATHER	
The Kingdom will be affected by a depression, thus it will be cloudy and rainy at intervals with temperatures dropping and winds becoming south-westerly active. In Amman, it will be partly cloudy with south-westerly winds and sea rough.	
Bulkin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
Amman Min. Max. Temp. 8 13	
Aqaba 11 22	
Deserts 3 15	
Jordan Valley 4 18	

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Hisham Kan'an	791386
Dr. Walid Al Masri	675485
Dr. Youssef Rashid	896301
Dr. Fayez Al Dabbas	759155
First pharmacy	161912
Second pharmacy	778339
Third pharmacy	637155
Al Asma pharmacy	623672
Natroukh pharmacy	626731
Al Salam pharmacy	626731
Yacoub pharmacy	626731
Simoneum pharmacy	626731
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Najih pharmacy	626731
IRBID:	
Dr. Mohammad Al Khalil	273899
Al Oud pharmacy	1—1
ZARQA:	
Dr. Said Al Kawajeh	54484
Khalifeh pharmacy	985417

EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Emergency	630341
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896300
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	616881
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	627467
Complaints	627467
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Complaints	787111
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Overseas Calls	1111231
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	731111
Jordan Television	731111
Radio Jordan	731111
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Jordan Electricity Authority	615615
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813, 32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	642361, 2
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Jahid Maternity, J. Amn	642361, 2
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Palestine, Shimonani	664171, 4
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University Hospital	645845
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The Islamic, Abdali	666127, 37
Al-Ahli, Abdali	666127, 37
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Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf	775111, 26
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Queen Alia Hospital	662341, 80
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa General Hospital	109198, 323
Zarqa National Hospital	109198, 323
The Sin Hospital	109198, 323
Al Hikma Medical Hospital	109198, 323
IRBID:	
Princess Basma Hospital	10212555
Greek Catholic Hospital	10212555

Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
05:05	Rome (AZ)
05:35	Cairo (MS)
06:30	Jeddah (SA)
07:30	Sanaa (Y)
12:25	Abu Dhabi (GF)
14:35	Karachi, Abu Dhabi (FI)
18:15	Paris, Damascus (AF)
19:45	Beirut (ME)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
09:30	Rome (RJ)
10:30	Berlin, London (RJ)
10:40	Istanbul (RJ)
11:10	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
19:30	Columbo (RJ)
19:45	Aqaba, Cairo (RJ)
20:00	Riyadh (RJ)
20:20	New Delhi (RJ)
20:30	Aden (RJ)
21:30	Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
22:45	Sanaa (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
05:55	Beirut, Paris (AF)
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10:25	Cairo (MS)
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13:30	Jeddah (SA)
15:45	Abu Dhabi (GF)
	Karachi (FI)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN	
Dep. Amman	8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus	5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus	7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman	5:00 p.m. every Sunday
MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in rils per kg.	
Apple	550 650
Banana	600 630
Banana (Mukammur)	600 630
Cabbage	70 140
Carrot	200 300
Cauliflower	140 180
Celery	260 300
Cucumber (large)	180 230
Cucumber (small)	380 480
Eggplant	170 180
Garlic	480 500
Green beans	220 230
Leek	120 130
Marrow (large)	180 230
Marrow (small)	300 320
Olives (green)	700 800
Orange	370 430
Onion (dry)	350 400
Onion (green)	230 250
Pepper (hot)	340 400
Pepper (sweet)	240 260
Potato	230 180
Radish	120 80
Tomato	270 240
Spinach	270 240
String beans	840 450

EBRUARY
RIEF
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Home News

JORDAN TIMES, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1994 3



Royal Highness Princess Basma Tuesday chats with residents of the Wadi Mousa area (Petra photo)

QAF donates JD8,000 in Wadi Mousa district

WADI MOUSA (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Tuesday accepted to give as the honorary president of Wadi Mousa Women's Society and announced a donation of JD5,000 from the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) to support the society's programmes and projects.

Princess Basma also donated JD1,000 to Wadi Mousa Sports Club and JD1,000 to the scouts and girl guide teams in Taybeh in appreciation of their contribution to the charity campaign being carried out with state support from youngsters around the Kingdom.

The Princess also donated JD1,000 from QAF purchase educational games and books for children in Um Sihan village, a Wadi Mousa sub-district.

The Princess, who was on a tour of Wadi Mousa and Karak, supervised the distribution of in-kind assistance to 603 families in Wadi Mousa, Taybeh and Um Sihan.

In her meetings with local communities in the Wadi Mousa area, Princess Basma stressed the important role of citizens in developing their communities by involvement in preparation and implementation of programmes provided by non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

She expressed appreciation to citizens in this region for their active role in supporting the charity campaign, which seeks to provide in-kind contributions and support family rehabilitation projects.

In Karak, the Princess met with representatives of the various sectors and committees taking part in the campaign and reviewed with them the charity's objectives.

Princess Basma was accompanied by members of the national committee in charge of the charity campaign and senior government officials from Ma'an and Karak governorates.

Another passionate performance by the French master of qanun

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — He performed last year at the Royal Cultural Centre and delighted a passionate audience, and now Julien Jalal Eddin Weiss is back to play for music lovers at the Philadelphia Hotel tonight.

The French master of the qanun (Arab zither), founder of the well-known Al Kindi ensemble, will perform along with Syrian Sheikh Hamza Shabour, a leading figure in both religious and secular songs. The two will be accompanied by Ziad Qadi on nay (Arabic reed flute) and Ahmad Al Bazm on riqq (tambourine).

Originally trained on classical guitar, Julien Weiss started to look for new horizons in order to free himself from what he describes as the rigidity of traditional Western classical music. For that, he explored jazz, Afro-Cuban and Brazilian harmonies and rhythms and finally found the Holy Grail in classical Arabic music.

Mr. Weiss, a talented improviser when playing, went through strictly systematic studies of the Arabic music and the qanun. Trained with the greatest masters from Egypt, Iran and Tunis, he left out no academic subject and is now considered as a reference himself.

His Al Kindi ensemble performed last November in Paris at the Theatre de la Ville in what has been described by critics as a "milestone" concert.

The knowledge of Julien Weiss Arabic culture, Islamic civilisation, customs and history makes him more than just a performer - a fully-integrated, original, oriented musician.



Julien Jalal Eddin Weiss studies of the Arabic music and the qanun. Trained with the greatest masters from Egypt, Iran and Tunis, he left out no academic subject and is now considered as a reference himself.

Crown Prince announces near completion of Dome of the Rock restoration project

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday announced that the renovation of the Dome of the Rock in Arab Jerusalem was nearing completion and said that the achievement of the work during the holy month of Ramadan bears a great significance for the Arab and Islamic world.

The Crown Prince was speaking during a visit to King Abdullah Mosque in Amman where he viewed a display depicting the progress on the restoration of the holy shrines in Jerusalem and similar work in Jordan at the tombs of the Prophet Mohammad's Companions.

The director of the restoration project in Jerusalem last month announced that the project, which is financed by His Majesty King Hussein, would be completed by the end of February.

Expressing his pleasure, Prince Hassan said that the renovation was carried out with the aim of strengthening Arab and Islamic rights in the holy city.

King Hussein had donated more than \$8 million to finance the work carried out by the Irish construction firm Mivan.

The work entailed the refurbishing of the dome by covering it with gold gilded copper sheets supported by lead beams and the restoration of the roofs and installing a fire alarm system.

Voicing appreciation to the Ministry of Awaqaf and the special committee charged with carrying out restoration plans, Prince Hassan said that Jerusalem has a history of 3,000 years of Arab and Islamic rule and the completion of the work on its shrines will support Arab and Islamic efforts to protect their rights.

The Prince appealed to the Arab and Islamic countries to take appropriate measures to ensure the re-establishment of Islamic sovereignty over the city.

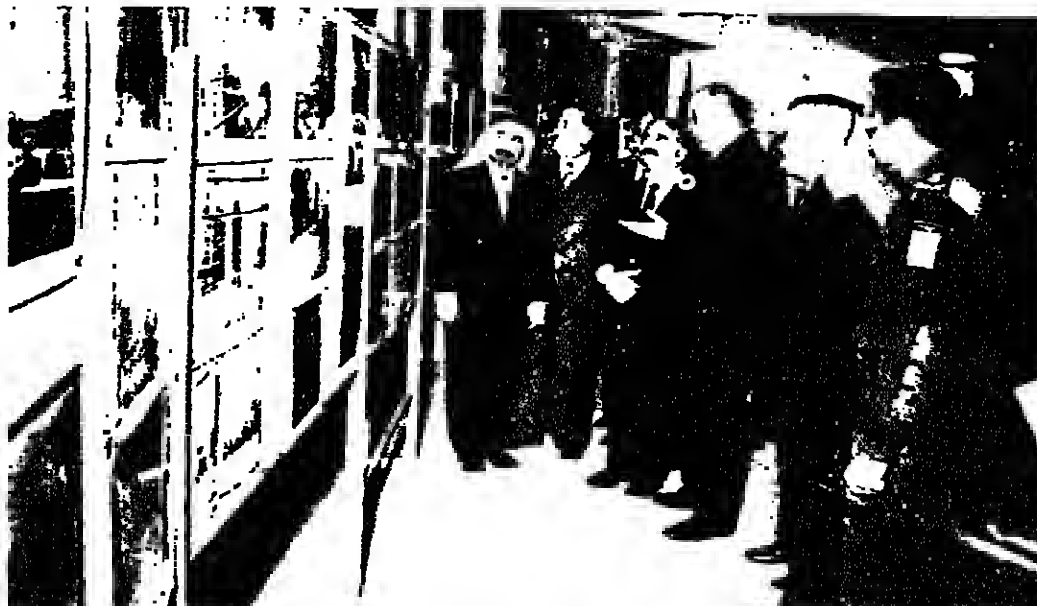
In the name of His Majesty King Hussein I express appreciation of the role which the Ministry of Awaqaf has been exercising towards restoring the shrines in the holy places and building shrines at the burial sites Prophet Mohammad's Companions in Jordan," said Prince Hassan.

He also thanked the ministry for taking charge of the Orphans Fund and conducting research in Islamic fields, urging the ministry to promote the collection of zakat (alms for the poor) in Jordan.

Prince Hassan toured the exhibition which displays 400 pictures of the holy places and different stages of construction work dealing as far back as 1952 when the first restoration in Jerusalem was carried out with funding from Jordan.

Prince Hassan was briefed by officials on the ministry's plans to develop mosques and to supervise the annual pilgrimages to Mecca.

Accompanying the Crown Prince on the tour was Chief Islamic Justice Izzuddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi and a group of leading scholars.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday views a display of photography chronicling restoration work on holy shrines in Jerusalem and Jordan (Petra photo)

Ministry to finalise draft on national health plan

AMMAN (Petra) — Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas Tuesday said the ministry was about to finalise the drafting of a comprehensive health insurance law and all of its 11 provisions.

Dr. Malhas said the law, which will benefit all sectors of the society, will be submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval at the beginning of April.

The law, he said, provides for the creation of a new establishment to be called the Comprehensive Health Insurance General Corporation, which will enjoy administrative and financial independence.

This corporation will have a board of directors to be chaired by the health minister, and will include as members representatives of the Royal Medical Services, the ministries of Health, Finance, Social Development and Labour, the president of the Jordan Medical Association, the president of the Private Hospitals Society, the dean of one of the medical schools in Jordan and three other members to be appointed by the Cabinet.

Dr. Malhas pointed out that the law also provides for the creation of a supplies and purchases department which will purchase equipment and medicine at lower rates than those of the local market.

The corporation's board of directors, he added, will be charged with drafting and drawing legislation for the comprehensive health insurance plan.

He concluded by saying that citizens will not be getting the health insurance services free of charge. Beneficiaries will have to pay the subscription fees provided for in the law so that they can receive the best health services, he said.

Also Tuesday, Dr. Malhas chaired a meeting of the Ministry of Health Grants and Projects Committee.

The committee heard a report presented by director of the ministry Planning Department Fuad Al Ayed on several projects carried out by the ministry, namely one aiming to expand the services of the mother and child care centres.

The projects carried out in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund, aims to reduce mortality rates in Jordan among mothers and infants.

Dr. Ayed also briefed the committee on the family health project conducted in collaboration with the University of Jordan. The project targets improving the quality and efficiency of health services at the ministry's various centres around the Kingdom.

Suspect Jordan-bound food to be inspected offshore, says Malhas

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas Tuesday said health authorities will stop cargo vessels carrying food stuffs bound for Jordan outside the port of Aqaba whenever they suspect the quality of the cargo.

"We will not allow such ships to enter into the port, but we will board them to ensure that they carry food fit for consumption in order to avoid any complications on shore," Dr. Malhas told the Jordan Times.

The minister was commenting on the discovery of a shipment of 1,300 tonnes of frozen meat meant for the Jordanian market which arrived at the port zone earlier this week. Jordanian authorities found that most of the meat on board had an expiry date of end of 1993.

The vessel, which earlier reports said came from a European port, dropped anchor offshore where health inspectors kept it until they completed their investigations of its meat cargo, said Dr. Malhas.

The health authorities in Aqaba boarded the vessel and discovered that only the surface layer of the 54,000 cartons containing the frozen meat bore a label with an expiry date of end of 1994.

The cartons beneath this layer, said the minister, clearly showed that the expiry labels were tampered with and that the expiry date was originally end of 1993.

Dr. Malhas said an unsuccessful attempt had been made to change the markings on these labels to end of 1994.

Earlier reports had said that the shipment was rejected by Egyptian authorities when the vessel attempted to dock at one of Egypt's ports, and that a Jordanian merchant had purchased the meat and changed the label on the lower cartons at sea.

"I have now referred the manifesto and the other papers provided by the ship's captain to the ministry's legal advisers to see if the merchant had breached Jordanian laws," said Dr. Malhas, adding that the meat was brought in for re-export to a neighbouring Arab country.

"From now on we will not allow suspected vessels to dock at the port, nor will we allow any discharging of the cargo at the free zone for re-export to an Arab country," he minister stressed.

In his measure, said Dr. Malhas, will be taken in order to save the Jordanian authorities any headaches and complications.

The minister, who last month accused merchants of continually abusing regulations and bringing in unsafe food, said that the ministry is determined to protect public health by all means at its disposal.

"For the time being, we wait for the decision of the legal advisers to determine whether the merchant had violated the law," added Dr. Malhas.

He said the health ministry would be forced to destroy the meat if it is found on Jordanian territory, but it would not reject a request by the merchant to return the cargo to its country origin.



Abdul Rahim Malhas

NEWS IN BRIEF

King, Qatari leader exchange cables
AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday sent a cable to Qatari leader Sheikh Khalifah Ben Hamad Al Thani congratulating him on his assumption of constitutional powers and wishing him continued good health and happiness and the Qatari people further progress and prosperity. Sheikh Khalifah also sent a cable to King Hussein congratulating him on the signing in Amman of the Yemeni reconciliation and reform agreement last Sunday. The Qatari leader expressed his heartfelt congratulations to King Hussein on the success of the Jordanian efforts and endeavours to overcome the differences between the Yemeni leaderships. "While expressing our support for Your Majesty's efforts to heal rifts among Arab ranks and to unite the Arab fold and word, we implore the Almighty God to bless you with continued good health and happiness," Sheikh Khalifah said. The King also received similar cables from Qatari Crown Prince Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifah Al Thani and Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament Nabih Berri. Also Tuesday King Hussein sent a cable to Sultan Hassan Al Bulgha of Brunei congratulating him on his country's national day and wishing him continued good health and happiness and the people of Brunei further progress and prosperity.

Crown Prince hosts iftar
AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday hosted an iftar at Hussein Youth City in honour of the Amman Mayor and heads of municipal and village councils. The Crown Prince and his guests performed the Al Maghreb prayer. Prince Hassan outlined the important role played by these councils in rendering basic services to citizens. He called on them to work as service-oriented institutions whose aim is to help the public. Greater Amman Mayor Mamdouh Al Abbadi expressed appreciation to His Majesty King Hussein for his support to the municipal and village councils.

Seminar to focus on Nationality, Passports Law
AMMAN (J.T.) — The Business and Professional Women's Club (BPWC) Wednesday will hold a seminar on the nationality and passports laws, at the Amman Chamber of Commerce at 12:30. Mohammad Kharabsheh, assistant director of the Passport and Civil Status Department will speak about the philosophy of the Nationality Law and the Passport Law. Ali Khatir, professor at the University of Jordan will speak about equity in both laws. Attorney Rifat Hazayemh will speak about the philosophy of civil status. According to the BPWC, this seminar is part of a series of legal seminars that aim at enlightening citizens of their rights and duties in legislation. It also seeks development of these laws to insure justice and equity between the two sexes.

Experts to finalise strategy on poverty

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Social Development is expected to finalise a national strategy on dealing with poverty by the end of March, according to ministry Secretary General Suleiman Al Rousan.

Work on the national plan, which started in September 1993, was carried out by a team of experts from the ministries of Social Development, Agriculture and Planning as well as the University of Jordan and the Audit Bureau, said Mr. Rousan in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Tuesday.

The strategy is considered a tool to help the government, private organisations and philanthropic societies deal with poverty which is a continually growing problem in Jordan, said Mr. Rousan.

The experts have not only diagnosed the pockets of poverty and their regions in the country, but also put forth proposals to be adopted by the concerned authorities to deal with this issue at the national level, added Mr. Rousan.

Under this plan, it is hoped that efforts of the public and private sectors would be united in order to implement schemes over several years to stem the problem, he said.

A statistical bulletin released by the government last December said that by the end of 1992 the number of needy families living below the poverty line rose to 6.6 per cent of the total number of households, up from 1.5 per cent in 1987.

The bulletin, prepared by the Ministry of Planning, also noted that the number of families living in absolute poverty was estimated at 21.3 per cent, up from 18.7 per cent in 1987.

In August last year a study on food supplies and Jordan's food production conducted by the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) revealed that the low food production in the Kingdom was responsible for poverty and a below normal rate of per capita share of food stuffs.

The new national strategy, said Mr. Rousan, would not only provide a timetable for its implementation, but also the appropriate mechanism for its success.

Referring to the work of the National Aid Fund (NAF), which operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Development, Mr. Rousan said that currently 30,000 needy families receive regular monthly financial aid vocational training to rehabilitate them towards self-reliance.

Mr. Rousan said the ministry this year allocated JD 1.8 million to carry out several new income-generating projects benefiting needy families and the establishment of a centre for the care of severely handicapped persons.

Israel, PLO work on details

(Continued from page 1)

pected to agree on Tuesday on telecommunications, archaeology, procedures for state land and land owned by absentees, and on issuing identity cards and travel documents for Palestinians under self-rule.

Mr. Tarif said he expected agreement on the civilian authority to be sealed early next week.

He said an economic committee which resumed talks in Paris on Monday, would tackle six issues including taxation, banking, insurance, fuel supplies and the environment.

Officials said the Paris talks have made progress on several key issues including market access and revenue sharing but areas of disagreement remained on banking and the Palestinians' demand for their own currency, which Israel has rejected.

Dr. Shauat said the talks in Cairo should also end in agreement on how big the Palestinian police force in Gaza and Jericho should be and what weapons it should have.

Israel insists Palestinian police must not carry mortars, rocket-propelled grenades or katyusha rockets. It says that in the first stage of Palestinian self-rule they should have only rifles, pistols and batons.

In Madrid Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Israel had made the "first 100 miles" down the road with the Palestinians and that peace talks had reached "the point of no-return."

Mr. Rabin was giving a press conference with his Spanish counterpart Felipe Gonzalez on the second and final day of an official visit to Spain.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- EXHIBITIONS**
- Exhibition of paintings by Riham Ghassib at The Gallery Inter-Continental Hotel.
 - Art exhibition by artist Jalal Arikat at Ab'ad Art Gallery (10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. except Fridays).
 - Art exhibition by several artists at the Alia Art Gallery (8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.).
 - Plastic art exhibition by artist Khalil Al Kofahi at the Yarmouk University.
 - Art exhibition by Iraqi artists at the Royal Cultural Centre (8:30 p.m.-midnight).
 - Computer exhibition at the Marriott Hotel.
 - Photo exhibition by artist Latifa Yousef at the Royal Cultural Centre.
 - Exhibition of medical herbs at the Royal Cultural Centre.
 - Book exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre (7:00 p.m.-midnight).
 - Book exhibition at the Jordan University for Women.
 - Art exhibition by Jordanian artists at the Royal Cultural Centre (7:00 p.m.-midnight).
 - Wood carving exhibition by artist Samer Ousama at the French Cultural Centre.
 - Art and photo exhibition by several Arab artists at the Balqa Art Gallery in Fuheis (Tel. 720902).
 - Exhibition by Lebanese artist Hussein Madi at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation. Also showing the
- DRAMA**
- "permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists. (Tel. 643251/2)
 - Drama in Arabic entitled "Hamlet Crucified Again" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
- FILMS**
- Film entitled "Dreams and Songs of the Noble Old" at the American Center at 2:30 p.m. (60 minutes).
- LECTURE**
- Seminar on "Naturalisation and Passports Laws" by Mr. Mohammad Al Kharabsheh, Dr. Ali Kattar and Mr. Rifa'i Al Hazza at the Amman Chamber of Commerce, in Shmeisani at 12:30 p.m.
- POETRY RECITAL**
- Poetry festival at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:30 p.m.
- MUSICAL PERFORMANCE**
- A recital of traditional Arab music by French Julien Jalal Eddin Weiss and Syrian Sheikh Hamza Chakowr at Philadelphia Hotel at 8:00 p.m.
- CHARITY BAZAAR**
- Charity bazaar at the International Exhibit Centre (9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.).

Jordan Times

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Oil in sanctions wheel

IT IS common knowledge by now that whenever Iraq gets closer to meeting its obligations under the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, new conditions spring up to frustrate its bid to end the international punitive measures against it. The addition of conditions in such cases is called, generally in the West, deliberate moving of the goalposts.

We have a better term for it: international blackmail. By this we mean that there are definite economic reasons behind the constant orchestration of new conditions against that Arab country. These reasons have roots in the world oil market glut.

There are several oil producing countries which would give or do anything to keep Iraqi oil out of the international market for the simple reason that oil prices have dropped considerably in the past few years and are hovering now about \$16 per barrel. Keeping Iraqi oil out of circulation would at least keep the already depressed prices where they are. The reintroduction of Iraqi petroleum products into the market stands to lower even further the current price ranges. The Arab oil producing countries alone saw their revenues drop from \$180 billion in the early eighties to a mere \$75 billion in 1993. And what applies to the Arab World applies also to other producers from various regions of the world. This is a colossal economic crisis, which would only be exacerbated by lifting the oil embargo on Baghdad.

The Western industrial countries, which count on the revenues of the oil producing countries to grease their economies by selling them more and more aircraft, tanks and guns, have a stake in keeping the pockets of these countries full and ready enough in order to be able to perform exactly such a task.

We would have thought there is a better way to stabilise the oil market than by continuing to punish the Iraqi people. Sooner or later, Iraqi oil will enter the market. It would be wiser and fairer if a global solution could be found for this problem based on sound economic considerations for both the exporters and importers of this basic commodity. The real issue now lies with OPEC countries themselves, which have not been able or willing to heed their own agreements. In the long run, a more equitable quota system could be applied that could satisfy the global economy in a balanced manner. Meanwhile, the persistent ostracisation of Iraq by the international community, even after it has gone more than 95 per cent of the way to meet its obligations, makes little sense besides being totally unfair and unjust. Gradual easing of the sanctions against Baghdad commensurate with the extent of its fulfilment of its international obligations must become the mainstay of the new policy towards it instead of the current arbitrary and unethical direction being followed now.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RAI Arabic daily Tuesday attacked as an irresponsible act a visit that U.S. ambassador to Khartoum made to southern Sudan. We condemn this action which was taken without approval from the Khartoum government, which is at war with the separatist rebels in the south, said the paper in an editorial. Indeed this action reminds us of the behaviour of the colonialist powers earlier this century and in the past when they wanted to impose their will on the people of the Third World, said the paper. The colonial powers seem still intent on imposing their will on the other nations of the world. Being the sole superpower after the demise of the Soviet empire, the United States is practising this role mainly against the Arab World, said the daily. We are not surprised, therefore, by the U.S. ambassador's actions because such behaviour is in line with the American mentality and reflects immoral and irresponsible acts, it added. The Americans, said the paper, fear no opposition from China and Europe, which are afraid to raise their voice in protest against American actions, it said. These actions, it said, are mainly directed against the Muslim world. If what the U.S. ambassador did was moral and acceptable, why don't the U.S. ambassadors around the world, particularly in Europe, visit the war torn Bosnia to investigate the slaughter of Muslims there, asked the paper. Why has the U.S. ambassador to Israel failed to make visits to the occupied Arab territories where the Israelis continue to slay defenceless Palestinians daily? The paper said that the U.S. ambassador claimed that he was going to the south to inspect a damaged church, and said that hundreds of churches were either desecrated or damaged by the Israelis and the Serbs without a finger being lifted by Washington or European capitals.

Controversy surrounds Nation of Islam

By James Zogby

ONCE AGAIN, a storm is brewing around Louis Farrakhan and his controversial Nation of Islam (NOI) movement.

The most visible component of the latest storm was a full page advertisement that appeared in a number of newspapers across the country. Signed by more than 100 U.S. religious, ethnic and civil rights leaders, the advertisement denounced the leadership of the NOI for "verbal attacks on whites, women, Jews, Catholics, Arabs, gays, and African Americans who criticise their persistently divisive message."

This recent round of attacks against the NOI was prompted by a speech given by Khalid Abdul Muhammad, the national spokesman of the NOI, on Nov. 19, 1993. In that speech, among other things, Mr. Muhammad:

— Denounced Arabs and Jews as "white imposters" who are "sucking the blood" of the "black nation and black community";

— called for killing all South African whites including women, babies, the crippled and the elderly. "We will" be said, "kill everything white that ain't right;"

— and referred to the Catholic Pope as an "old, no-good... (white) cracker."

After a national outpouring of denunciations, including strong criticism from other African-American leaders, Farrakhan rebutted his national spokesman and stripped him of his position, saying that his speech was "vile in manner, repugnant, malicious... and against the spirit of Islam." But Farrakhan went on to "stand by the truths that he (Mr. Muhammad) spoke," and then attacked those who had attacked the NOI.

Far from quieting the storm, Mr. Farrakhan's rebuttal/reaffirmation of Mr. Muhammad's remarks gave new life to the controversy.

The most troubling aspect of this new conflict for Mr. Farrakhan is the threat it poses to his efforts to gain acceptance from mainstream African-American elected officials. That effort has been underway for about six months now, but achieved its high point last fall through a key public embrace of Mr. Farrakhan by the Congressional Black Caucus and respected African-American civil rights leaders like the Reverend Jesse Jackson, and the Reverend Benjamin Chavis, president of the NAACP (the nation's largest civil rights organisation).

The embrace was part of a larger strategy of mainstream African-American leaders to bring together all leadership elements in their community together in an effort to fight the problems of crime and drugs which disproportionately affect the African-American community.

But for Mr. Farrakhan, the embrace was the public relations coup he had long awaited.

After years of being relegated to the sidelines of African-American politics, the embrace represented for Mr. Farrakhan an unprecedented level of acceptance from mainstream leaders and came because of his NOI's work in fighting crime and drugs and promoting black self-help projects.

While Jewish organisations, long-time foes of Mr. Farrakhan, reacted angrily to the African-American leadership's agreement to work with Mr. Farrakhan, the African-American leaders insisted on their prerogative to heal their community's internal rifts and to work for self-improvement.

The controversy that erupted over Mr. Muhammad's speech and Mr. Farrakhan's seeming endorsement of some of it's "hate-filled" message once again left Mr. Farrakhan in an isolated position as mainstream African-American leaders were forced to publicly criticise his message and shun the NOI.

To understand the origins of this current conflict and why it has become so great, it is useful to examine the historic role played by the NOI in the African-American community.

The History and Role of the Nation of Islam

The Nation of Islam was founded in the 1930's by an African-American who changed his name to Elijah Muham-

mad. Elijah claimed to have received a revelation to begin this faith from a person he called Fard Muhammad, whom he asserted was a messenger of God. Mr. Fard's message to Elijah was simple: He was to awaken "the black nation to the full range of the black man's possibilities in a world temporarily dominated by the blue-eyed white devils."

While the NOI uses the Qur'an and a great deal of religious terminology derived from Islam, its theology is quite unique and by any standard heretical.

Like other black separatist movements which emerged in the same period (and were apparently also inspired by Fard Muhammad), the NOI preached racial hatred and division. In fact, to justify their beliefs, the NOI teaches that all men were originally black until the evil scientist Yacub broke the will of God and created the mutant white species. The evil whites then came to dominate the earth and enslave blacks.

According to the theology of the NOI not only Jews, but Arabs also are part of this evil white race which has usurped all the world's wealth and power — and even Islam — from the black race. The "call" of the NOI is, therefore, simple: Blacks should wake up, recognise their true power, separate from white society and work to regain their rightful power and place in God's plan for the world.

Elijah's message proved quite attractive to many dispossessed blacks because it had both economic and political themes. The religion grew to include more than 250,000 believers in the late 1950's.

As the NOI grew, so did the mystique around Elijah. Reading the literature of the NOI suggests that Elijah himself was claiming to be a prophet of God and there are even intimations that he might be the Messiah.

Because the NOI's message was racial separation, it never supported, and even actively opposed, the civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King. The NOI did not want equal rights; it wanted power and black separation, so it inspired and allied not with the civil rights movement but with the many black separatist, African cultural nationalists and militant black liberation groups (such as the Black Panthers) during the ferment of the late 1960's and early 1970's.

While the NOI never grew to the size of the NAACP or other civil rights groups, its influence among angry African-American youths was considerable.

When Elijah died in 1975 the movement underwent a dramatic shift. The NOI's national spokesman Louis Farrakhan was passed over for the group's leadership in favour of Elijah's son Warith Deen Muhammad. Warith Deen changed the name of the group to the World Community of Al-Islam in the West, sold off most of the group's economic assets that had been built up by his father and moved to integrate the movement's followers with Sunni Islam.

Warith Deen was largely successful in his efforts to bring his community into the mainstream. Hundreds of thousands of African-Americans joined his call and began to practice orthodox Islam and integrated themselves into the larger Muslim communities in the U.S. Today African-Americans make up 40 per cent of the U.S. Muslim community.

After watching this change for close to three years, Mr. Farrakhan finally broke with Warith Deen in 1978 and restarted the NOI, declaring himself to be the true descendant of the racial separation theology of Elijah Muhammad. While Warith Deen can point to over 1,000,000 African-American orthodox Muslims, Mr. Farrakhan's movement numbers only about 25,000. But these numbers do not tell the entire story.

Mr. Farrakhan's appeal, like that of Elijah's, extends well beyond those who convert, join the movement and accept its discipline. With its message of black pride, anti-white anger combined with self-help and economic power, the NOI strikes a responsive chord in the hearts of millions of African-Americans.

One prominent African-American political scientist has described Mr. Farrakhan as a "measure of the depth of black alienation from white America." The more angry blacks are, the more successful Mr. Farrakhan will be. Ironically, the more that white leaders attack him the more popular Mr.

Farrakhan becomes in some quarters of the African-American community.

From 1978 to 1983 Mr. Farrakhan continued hostility towards black civil rights leaders.

But in 1983, Mr. Farrakhan asked black leaders to allow him to speak at the March on Washington to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Martin Luther King's historic 1963 march. While many Jewish and white leaders were outraged, the African-American civil rights leaders were delighted by the prospect that Mr. Farrakhan might be changing his tune and welcomed him to the march, hoping that in so doing they would achieve an unprecedented unity in the ranks of the African-American community.

But Mr. Farrakhan's appearance at the march and his brief involvement in 1984 in Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign turned out to be no more than a tactical ploy to expand his audience.

Once he revealed that his theology of racial hatred had not changed, the pressure from Jewish leaders and the anger and disappointment of black leaders resulted in a renewal of Mr. Farrakhan's political isolation. But while Mr. Farrakhan was isolated from the elites and political mainstream, his appeal among disaffected African-Americans increased.

So it is with the current controversy. As before, Mr. Farrakhan's latest effort to gain access to the mainstream of African-American leadership has been thwarted; and, as before, Jewish and white Christian groups have denounced his message of racial separation. But it is equally true that the controversy itself and the massive outpouring of public denunciations by elected officials and other leaders has only served to increase Mr. Farrakhan's appeal — and not only among the most dispossessed in the African-American community. The treatment of the NOI also creates resentment among even middle class and professional blacks who, while they reject Mr. Farrakhan's message, are also in a rage at the way the white media and political leaders have relentlessly attacked an African-American.

Other issues that could be explored with respect to the NOI include the role that the group has played in distorting the view that some Americans have had of Islam as a religion with a universal message and the role that the NOI has played both a symptom and aggravator of the Black-Jewish split in U.S. politics.

With regard to the first issue, it is important to note that Warith Deen Muhammad was prominent among the mainstream and orthodox African-American Muslim community and has been able to define Islam in its true form. With an African-American Muslim chaplain in the U.S. military, an African-American Muslim invited to speak before the U.S. Senate and at President Bill Clinton's inauguration, orthodox Muslims are emerging as a force able to correct the image of Islam that has long been distorted by the followers of Elijah Muhammad.

The history of the Black-Jewish tension is a long and complicated one which I may treat in another article, but it would be important to note that the overwhelming and, at times, excessive reaction of American-Jewish leaders to Mr. Farrakhan's racism only seems to create a deeper resentment among many in the African-American community. In response to pressure from Jewish-American leaders, African-American elected officials will denounce Mr. Farrakhan's message, but they resent being forced to do so.

So long as tension and inequality remain a prominent characteristic of U.S. political, economic and social life, the anger that breeds the NOI will remain and there will be those like Elijah, Mr. Farrakhan and Khalid Muhammad who will find an audience receptive to their message of frustration and bitterness.

The writer is president of the Washington-based Arab-American Institute. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Egypt's grave challenge

'President Mubarak is in danger of being overthrown by fundamentalists'

By James Adams

AMERICAN intelligence analysts believe that President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt is in grave danger of being overthrown by Islamic fundamentalists, with catastrophic consequences for Western interests in the Middle East.

A classified intelligence assessment being drafted warns that Mubarak is likely to fall and his country slide into economic chaos and civil war if present trends continue.

The report, known as a National Intelligence Estimate, represents the collective wisdom of all American intelligence agencies. It suggests that Islamic fundamentalists will continue to make gains across Egypt, leading to the eventual collapse of the Mubarak government, which is the geopolitical linchpin of American policy in the Arab World.

The Mubarak government maintains that it has the situation under control, and it has accused the foreign media of exaggerating the problem. But the intelligence estimate makes clear that the Americans are in despair over the widespread police raids, torture of suspects, military trials and executions and refusal to deal with any of the underlying social problems that give the fundamentalists a political platform.

The gloomy American assessment dovetails with a classified Israeli intelligence analysis late last year which warned of Mubarak's shaky position and the consequences if he falls. Egypt is a key supporter of the peace agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

A fundamentalist government in Cairo would end the peace agreement and scrap the Camp David peace accords between Egypt and Israel. It would also give a boost to Iran.

"There is no question of our



deserting Egypt or Mubarak," said one official. "Rather we are trying to understand just how serious the situation is and then decide what we can do about it."

So far, the Americans have been unable to do much, as Mubarak has insisted on adopting draconian methods to try to eliminate a terrorist movement that enjoys considerable popular support. Suspects are herded into mass military trials; summary hearings are followed by mass executions. Last week, according to official figures, 942 people were detained.

American analysts argue that draconian tactics have failed in many countries and are failing in Egypt. Both the State Department and the intelligence community have been urging Mubarak to introduce political and economic reform but so far he has refused to change his hardline policy. He has offered "national dialogue" with secular opposition parties, but if all religious organisations are excluded, the government will

simply further alienate the militants and encourage their supporters, say analysts.

Deaths from the violence have risen sharply. In 1991, 96 Islamic militants and police were killed; in 1992 the number was 322 and last year 1,116. But the violence has broadened with the terrorists specifically targeting foreign tourists, six of whom have been killed.

The Islamic Group, the main terrorist organisation, this month warned: "We implore tourists and investors to leave the country because the next operations will be extremely ferocious. We are forced to this to defend our faith, the values we hold sacred and ourselves in the face of the lack of law and of human rights which the dictatorial Mubarak regime embodies."

Using a classic tactic of insurgency movements, the fundamentalists have tried, with some success, to create a parallel government. In the south of Egypt, where fundamentalists are strongest, teachers

have reintroduced the veil and imposed a more Islamic curriculum.

Islamic medical clinics, run by supporters of the fundamentalists, are spreading and replacing the state system. Fundamentalists have also taken over the organisations that control the medical, legal and engineering professions.

As control of such groups shifts to the militants so they expand their recruiting base, helped by hundreds of thousands of illicit tapes that are freely circulating throughout the country. These encourage their listeners to shun all Christians and to fight the government. Such tapes were a big weapon in the successful war waged in Iran by Ayatollah Khomeini against the Shah of Iran.

Because of the parallels with the Iranian revolution, Egyptian officials have insisted that the rise of fundamentalism in Egypt has been caused by Iran. In fact, fundamentalist movements in Egypt go back to the 1920s and have experienced a resurgence recently largely because the gap between the rich and poor in the country has widened.

Egypt is being seen as a test case for the success of Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East. Already, the government of Algeria is under siege from fundamentalists and can barely hold its civil war consumes the country. There is already a fundamentalist regime in Sudan and if Egypt falls, analysts warn, there is a danger that the whole of north Africa could turn fundamentalist.

The Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are also vulnerable, as their economies suffer the consequences of the overspending of the 1980s decade that saw corruption institutionalised and any concept of real democracy checked. The Sunday Times.

The Sunday Times

East Asia's arms trade is going local

By Gerald Segal

LONDON — Britain's practice of selling weapons to Malaysia and Indonesia while providing development aid has become an issue. Environmentalists and human rights advocates cry foul. A committee of parliament is investigating whether there has been a violation of the rules against linking arms and aid. The controversy obscures the fact that the arms trade in East Asia is changing into a much more complex business.

Sales of military hardware off the shelf are declining. Purchases of major weapons by East Asia in 1992 totalled \$3.6 billion, down from \$5.2 billion in 1987 in constant-dollar prices.

While arms exports to East Asia fall, competition between European and American weapons sellers intensifies. The provision of "sweeteners," whether in bribes or linkage with aid projects, is likely to increase. More arms are being bought within the region. Just as East Asians learned to produce civilian goods that they once had to import from the West, so they are now expanding their arms industries.

Spending on defence is not rising as a percentage of gross national product (GNP) in East Asia because most countries are in the midst of rapid economic growth. However, absolute spending on defence is increasing. From 1985 to 1992, outlays rose by 28.5 per cent in Japan, 63 per cent in South Korea, 25 per cent in China, 31 per cent in Malaysia, 36 per cent in Singapore and 31 per cent in Taiwan.

Many countries in the region have industries with advanced technology and a pool of engineers and scientists. Hard-pressed defence industries in the West have learned from the civil sector just how capable the East Asians can become. Moreover, they need East Asian business.

South Korea is acquiring 120 F-16 fighters from the United States, but only 12 are being bought off the shelf; the rest will be assembled from kits or by coproduction. Taiwan's purchase of F-16s from America will involve a significant amount of work for the Taiwan aerospace industry. Other states in the region are also using arms purchases from the West to lay the basis for an indigenous aerospace and weapons business. Malaysia's acquisition of FA-18s from the United States includes coproduction, as did Indonesia's order of F-16s.

Of course, sometimes the desire for indigenisation has its price. This was seen in South Korea's development of an anti-aircraft system that could not distinguish between friendly and enemy planes. But Western companies realise the risks of underestimating East Asian industry in its early stages. The region has a record of learning fast and then sending exports to the West and capturing significant slices of the market.

Arms manufacturers in the West are inclined to cooperate, especially European companies that are often shut out of the United States on national security grounds.

The development of aerospace and defence businesses in East Asia has important lessons for the wider world. Total arms sales to the region will continue to fall, but that is not the part of the market to watch. Instead, increasingly complex coproduction arrangements and co-ownership of defence companies are likely. Just as more than half the trade between developed industrial powers takes place within single multinational firms, trade in the defence sector will gradually go the same way.

China, anxious to limit arms sales to Taiwan, will find this process increasingly difficult to control.

International Herald Tribune.

'A success story'

Through NHF's Women-in-Development project, Hafayes Obeidat rises from under the poverty line to the comfort of self-reliance

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — When Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) offered Hafayes Obeidat the opportunity to benefit from its medicinal herbs scheme in Irbid governorate, Ms Obeidat and her family were living under the poverty line on a monthly income of JD 80.

Four years later, this mother of five is earning a monthly income of JD 500 as a successful "business woman" in this small village in the north. Not only has Ms. Obeidat paid off her debts, but she is lending money to her relatives in the village and employing three people in her thyme gardens.

Before joining the NHF's Women-in-Development project, says Ms. Obeidat, her family was living on the verge of poverty. She then accepted a job at a garment factory. To make ends meet, Ms. Obeidat used to borrow money from well-to-do friends and neighbours, especially at the beginning of the school year when she and her husband used to worry about how to provide their five children with the books, uniforms and other requirements essential for their education.

All that began to change in 1989, says Ms. Obeidat, when the development efforts to NHF reached her village with the Women-in-Development project. In 1989, Ms. Obeidat and other rural women found an opportunity to work and help alleviate the suffering of their families.

"We could not believe that land would be so rewarding to those who harvest it," says Ms. Obeidat. But when the women federation branch in Irbid told "us that NHF is ready to provide us with all that is necessary to plant the land, we said we will give it a try to see if we can improve our lives."

NHF provided women with seedlings, fertilisers, irrigation equipment and expertise to plant small areas of land around their homes with medicinal herbs such as thyme, sage and camomile. It also set up packaging centres to which women bring their produce where it is dried and packaged before it is marketed either as beverages or raw material for medicine.

Ms. Obeidat started with planting 1700 seedlings of thyme in an area of one dunum around her house. Encouraged by the "huge profits" she made, says Ms. Obeidat,



Hafayes Obeidat watches the thyme saplings that she sells to other villagers

she started exploiting other areas of land to expand her little "business."

With the help of agricultural engineers from NHF, Ms. Obeidat succeeded in adding another dimension to her work: In addition to producing herbs that she had sold through NHF, Ms. Obeidat started to produce seedlings that she sold to other women who became interested in the project.

"I have sold more than 160,000 seeds of thyme and other herbs to over 50 women in 18 villages," says Ms. Obeidat.

Ms. Obeidat even sold seeds to the Agriculture Directorate in Irbid, with her sales in four years amounting to over JD 16,500.

As the work expanded, more people were needed to keep up with the increasingly growing responsibilities of her little enterprise. Ms. Obeidat's husband and her sister and brother in law became fully involved in the project. Two other women were employed and a handicapped man found a work opportunity when he started by selling seedlings from Ms. Obeidat and selling them to other women in other villages.

With enough liquidity available to the family, Mr. Obeidat decided to expand yet further and he leased extra areas of agricultural land that he and his wife used to plant trees as a long-term investment.

Though they were initially apprehensive to having their wives work, Mr. Obeidat and his brother eventually devoted all their time to the family scheme, shouldering whatever responsibilities

coming their way in terms of developing it, says Mr. Obeidat.

"Our life has improved a lot since we joined" the NHF project, says Ms. Obeidat. She says: "I send JD 1,000 to my son so that he can continue his education (at university in a neighbouring Arab country). So does my sister in law for her son." Ms. Obeidat says she also managed to finance the education of her daughter at a community college.

Ms. Obeidat is one of 500 women who have been benefited from the Women-in-Development project since it was launched in five villages in the north in 1989. The medicinal herbs scheme's initial phase included 27 gardens from which 53 women benefited directly.

Over 150 women and their families are currently directly involved with the scheme, which in 1992 yielded more than 10 per cent of Jordan's imports of thyme and sage.

Agriculture engineer Wafa Mazahreh says the scheme is "on its way to meeting the country's needs (of thyme and sage) after the area of the planted land rose to over 130 dunums."

Ms. Mazahreh says over 500 rural women and their families benefited from the schemes of the Women-in-Development project, which include bee keeping, rabbit raising, leather stitching and light shoe and garment production.

After joining these schemes, says Ms. Mazahreh, women attained more social growth and contributed to the development of their communities. They became self-reliant.

Once bustling Quneitra is testimony to Israel's 'inhumanity'

From Michael Jansen in Quneitra

QUNEITRA, once a bustling cross-roads town, provincial capital of the Golan governorate, is now a national park visited by local tourists and foreign correspondents. At the entrance is a tall triangular monument commemorating the town's return to Syrian rule in June 1974 after seven years of Israeli occupation.

Like the empty modern port city of Famagusta in Cyprus, occupied by the Turkish army in 1974, Quneitra sustained very little damage during its capture in June 1967. Like Famagusta, it was a "ghost town" simply deserted by its inhabitants, its buildings and streets empty. But a week before Quneitra's hand-over, under the Syria-Israel disengagement agreement, the Israelis blasted and bulldozed 90 per cent of Quneitra's houses and stripped and gutted all its public buildings — three mosques, three churches, administrative blocks, schools, cinema and hospital.

The collapsed houses, roof slabs tilting at crazed angles, bulldozer-scattered pillars of the shops along the main street, the burnt-out cinema, the broken floor tiles in the shell of the Orthodox church constitute another sort of monument, a monument to man's inhumanity to man, to the practices now known, thanks to the war in Bosnia, as "ethnic cleansing." Israel never intended Syrians to return to their homes and lands.

In November 1974, Israel was condemned by the U.N. General Assembly for the "deliberate destruction and devastation" of the town.

This was considered a "grave breach" of the Geneva Convention. A special committee which visited the town recommended that a commission should be established to "study the legal consequences" of Israel's actions. And if there is peace, Syria could claim compensation for this act of vandalism.

Before the Israeli occupation at about noon on June 10, 1967, Quneitra was a prosperous town with a population of 53,000. The province's 142 villages and hamlets had another 100,000 inhabitants.

Today three or four people, elderly survivors of six families who stayed during the occupation, and 40 to 50 fat-tailed sheep live in the two-thirds of Quneitra under Syrian control. Today 50,000 Syrians dwell in 10 row cement box villages in the one-third of the Golan Israel returned to Syria when Quneitra was restored.

The one-third of Quneitra remaining under Israeli control is a no-man's land, mined and cut off by spike-rolls of barbed wire. In the two-thirds of Quneitra under Israeli control, 18,000 Syrians live in five villages clustered in the north below the slopes of the highest peak in the anti-Lebanon range, "Jabal Shaikh" or "Mount Hermon," and 13,000 Israelis in 32 settlements, some of which were built on the ruins of Syrian villages.

There are at least 250,000, and perhaps as many as 350,000, Golan refugees living in Syrian towns and cities, a powerful pressure group demanding the return of their lands, if not their homes. Last week the Syrian official daily Tishreen reasserted its government's traditional demand that the whole of the Golan must be returned to Syria as its price for peace with Israel. But this time the paper said that "every atom" of the Golan had to be returned.

This usage was adopted by counter the suggestion by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that he was prepared for partial "withdrawal on" the Golan, rather than "withdrawal from" the entire occupied area. The demand for a pull-out from "every atom" was a measure of Syria's frustration with the lack of progress in 27 months of negotiations.

Syria is feeling this frustration more than ever now because during the summit meeting between President Hafez Al Assad and U.S. President Bill Clinton on Jan. 16, Mr. Assad defined for Mr. Clinton what Syria meant by "full peace" — "normal relations" including open borders, trade, an exchange of diplomats and tourism. However, Israel failed to deliver the quid pro quo both presidents expected in terms of defining the extent of Israeli withdrawal from the Golan. And, to make matters worse, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher stated subsequently that Washington would not press Israel to make concessions on the Golan; indicating that even defining its intentions would be too great a concession for Israel. On Feb. 15, the Syrian media, which had refrained from criticising the U.S. over its refusal to honour its promise and take an active role in peacemaking, said that "the people of the

region wait for Bill Clinton" to assume his responsibilities.

The Golan is important to Syria for three reasons. First, it is, of course, part of the national patrimony which no Syrian government would be prepared to cede.

Second, the Golan, a basalt plateau of 1,860 square kilometres, 80 kilometres long and 15 kilometres wide, overlooks the plain of Damascus to the east and the Galilee region of northern Israel to the west. Although Israel claims possession of the Golan is "essential" to its security because Syrian gunners, before 1967, used to shell Jewish settlements in northern Israel from the plateau, the Golan has far more strategic importance to Syria for Damascus is just one hour's drive, 67 kilometres, along a good road.

Third, the Golan is a well-watered farming area, producing apples and grapes in the north, grains in the centre and bananas, citrus and early vegetables in the south, near Lake Tiberias.

For Israel, water rather than security is of primary importance. The Golan is the catchment area for the Banias complex of lakes and rivers located in the panhandle at the top of Israel. The snows on Jabal Shaikh-Mount Hermon feed Lake Tiberias and springs in the northern Israel.

In a report produced in 1991 by the Jaffee Centre at Tel Aviv University, Israeli experts demonstrated that Israel could withdraw partially from both the Golan and the occupied West Bank and still retain control over water resources in these areas. The

report was suppressed.

October 1993 when its findings were published by Zeev Haaretz, because both the Likud and Labour governments did not want to give the impression that Israel was making plans for withdrawal. The report made it clear that Israel intends to maintain control of not only rivers and lakes, but also underground reservoirs and the environment to prevent pollution of sources. And not only in Syria, but in Jordan and Lebanon as well. The report was accompanied by a map showing the line of Israeli withdrawal from all but the crucial central portion opposite the old international frontier. Such a partial, even if substantial, withdrawal is, of course, unacceptable to Syria which would be prepared to negotiate mutually advantageous arrangements for the sharing of water once Israel committed itself to the return of the whole of the Golan to Syria.

As the saying goes, "There can be no Arab-Israeli war without Egypt and no peace without Syria." This is certainly true today because Syria, Jordan and Lebanon have committed themselves to a "comprehensive peace" on the Arab front and "comprehensive," complete and detailed settlements on their local fronts. Unless Syria receives the Golan, there will be no peace. A Western diplomat says this fact had, generally, been accepted by the international community and that it was up to Israel to make its decision. A "hard" decision, because Israel has, so far, always, to echo the words of King Hussein, chosen land over peace.

By John Oweo-Davies Reuter

MANADO, Indonesia — Hymn singling to the sound of guitars pervades the balmy night air of this remote but bustling northern city in mainly Muslim Indonesia.

Dutch-style churches with deep sloping red roofs dominate roads in well-ordered Manado, a city that takes pride in religious tolerance.

"We have no religious problems here. Christians and Muslims are all together. We never fight," said taxi driver Arthur Telew, a 60-year-old Presbyterian churchgoer.

This was echoed by a 24-year-old Muslim, an instructor in some of the world's best scuba diving territory around pillars of coral in dazzlingly clear waters.

"We tend to get together during Christian and Muslim festivals. The fact that 80 per cent of the people are Christian makes no difference," he

Tolerance pervades Indonesian city

said.

Their words would hearten Indonesia's long-serving President Suharto, who has said conflict between religious groups could damage the world's fourth most populous nation.

Authorities have been trying to quell a separatist Islamic Rebellion in Sumatra's northern Aceh province, while they have had a long-standing dispute with Batak Christians on Sumatra.

Manado, a city of 300,000 people surrounded by volcanoes and tropical forests, was called by 19th century British naturalist Alfred Wallace "one of the prettiest in the east." It lies at the northern tip of the strangely star-shaped island of Sulawesi, once known as the Celebes.

Christian traditions in the city and other areas of north Sulawesi, east of Borneo and south of the Philippines, fol-

low several centuries of Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch Domination.

Most of the rest of Sulawesi, bisected by the Equator, is 80 per cent Muslim, just below the figure for all Indonesia which has an estimated 183 million people.

"We have no religious problems here. Christians and Muslims are all together. We never fight," taxi driver Arthur Telew.

Paulus Daun, a 50-year-old Presbyterian preacher, says he and his colleagues occasionally get together with their Muslim counterparts to

get to know each other and build understanding.

Mr. Daun, of Chinese extraction, decided to join the church when he became the family breadwinner after his father died.

"All I wanted was to get money for my life. After getting money, I felt it was not everything, I felt an emptiness so I went into the church," he said.

People in Manado ascribe the religious harmony partly to the often-repeated official ideology of Pancasila, seen by Indonesian leaders as fundamental for unity in the diverse archipelago.

Pancasila's five tenets include "the belief in one supreme god" and "democracy through deliberation and consensus among representatives."

Some people in Manado, which has sizeable number of Roman Catholics as well as

Presbyterians, fear an influx of foreign tourists following a widespread government promotion campaign could harm religion.

"Tourism could be a religious problem, especially on the moral side. It will be a challenge for me," another pastor said.

Sulawesi, a 1,200 km-long island, boasts one of the world's richest collections of mammal, bird and marine life something on which tourist planners want to capitalise.

The first recorded visit by Europeans to North Sulawesi was around 1520 when a Portuguese fleet looking for cloves and other spices arrived. It was followed by missionaries who set up Indonesia's oldest church, the Evangelical church of Minahasa.

Spaniards, from their colony in the Philippines, later exerted control over the Minahasa region, now in Manado's hinterland.

Verdict uncertain in World Trade Centre bombing

By Gail Appleson Reuter

NEW YORK — A federal jury will begin deliberations this week to decide who bombed the World Trade Centre, but it is far from certain whether all four defendants will be convicted.

Although investigators had moved quickly to arrest the men for launching the devastating attack on New York's twin-tower complex, the fact remains that the evidence — particularly against two of them — is open to interpretation.

The jury is expected to begin deliberations just a few days before the first anniversary of the Feb. 26, 1993 blast that killed six and injured more than 1,000.

But prosecutors, hampered by a lack of eyewitnesses,

were forced to build their case on a complex chain of circumstantial and scientific evidence. Because of this, legal experts said the verdict could rest on whether the government convinced the jury during closing arguments that all of the pieces of the puzzle were a perfect fit.

The four men on trial are Mohammad Salameh, Nidal Ayyad, Ahmad Ajaj and Mahmoud Abu Halima.

There are also two fugitives named in the case, Ramzi Yousef, who prosecutors allege is the mastermind of the deadly plot, and Abdul Yasin.

Summations by defence attorneys are to end Tuesday followed by the government's rebuttal and jury instruction. Last week, assistant U.S. attorney Henry Depippo gave a strong summation that

logically explained how the defendants could be linked and how they allegedly carried out the plot.

But the evidence remains weak, particularly against Mr. Ajaj, who was in prison six months before the blast and was not released until two days after the explosion.

Mr. Ajaj was arrested in September 1992 when he tried to enter the country on a flight from Pakistan carrying a false Swedish passport. Prosecutors allege he was travelling with Mr. Yousef and that the two planned the blast before Mr. Ajaj's arrest.

Authorities found bomb-making manuals and anti-Jewish pamphlets in Mr. Ajaj's luggage. The materials were seized and were in the government's possession at

the time of the blast.

His lawyer, Austin Campiello, argued that Mr. Ajaj could not have participated in the bombing because he was in prison and was "about as hermetically sealed as it is possible to be."

The government's case against Mr. Abu Halima also has problems. A key witness who was expected to identify Mr. Abu Halima as travelling with Mr. Salameh and Mr. Yousef the day of the blast instead committed a historic courtroom blunder by initially pointing to a juror instead of Mr. Abu Halima.

In contrast, prosecutors were able to produce voluminous exhibits against Mr. Salameh and Mr. Ayyad.

The evidence supported allegations that Mr. Salameh rented both the storage shed

believed to have held the chemicals used in the explosion and the Ryder van alleged to have carried the bomb to the World Trade Centre.

Mr. Salameh had reported the van stolen and was arrested after several attempts to get his deposit back on the van.

His defence lawyer, Robert Precht, said that Mr. Salameh was unwittingly part of the deadly scheme. He said Mr. Salameh was duped by Mr. Yousef "...a ruthless, evil genius" who preyed on poor, struggling immigrants. He said that Mr. Yousef kept Mr. Salameh "in the dark" about the plot.

While Mr. Precht's summation was forceful, it is unclear whether the jury will believe that Mr. Salameh

could not have known what was happening.

In the case of Mr. Ayyad, a former chemical engineer, prosecutors offered much evidence to support allegations he ordered chemicals, including tanks of hydrogen gas, believed used in the explosion.

He is also accused of sending the messages to the news organisations taking credit for the bombing.

Mr. Ayyad's lawyer argued that his client thought he was buying the chemicals for a legitimate business being started by friends. But there was no evidence presented during the trial about this business and the judge chastised the lawyer for "coming out with things which have absolutely no basis whatsoever in the record."

Russia blocks ultimatums

(Continued from page 1)

Council. But a spokesman for the Yugoslav army, Colonel Ljubodrag Stojadinovic, told the Bosnian Serb news agency IRNA Tuesday that Belgrade would not stand by if the airport were reopened by force, because it is too close to Yugoslavia.

Tuzla lies some 40 kilometres from the border with the rump Yugoslavia, comprising Serbia and Montenegro.

"If the Tuzla airport were

reopened by force that would mean that NATO is once again exceeding its responsibilities, but in this case we would not be indifferent," Mr. Stojadinovic warned.

The United States said Tuesday that it would not immediately send peacekeepers to Bosnia, as the Russians have asked.

"It's not something that we plan to do. Our position has not changed," said White House spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers.

Security forces arrest 30

(Continued from page 1)

Most of Abu Nidal's supporters are drawn from Palestinian students studying abroad, reports say. The group is also known to maintain ties with extremist groups in Europe and Japan.

The group was split in 1990-91 while in Libya. Some of its members were killed and others fled after clashes among themselves. Some of them set up a rival group, which is now believed to be based in Iraq

but has no record of any extremist attacks after moving to Baghdad.

Abu Nidal himself was reported to have moved out of Libya following the split.

In December, Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, in a sign of renewed defiance against the international characterisation of his country as a haven for extremist groups, invited leaders of all leftist and under-

ground groups to attend a conference in Libya and set up bases in the country. It is not known whether Abu Nidal took up the invitation.

The local Al Bilad weekly carried a report this week including what it said was a copy of a Dec. 22, 1993, letter Abu Nidal sent to Colonel Qadhafi denouncing the international sanctions imposed against Libya to pressure it to extradite two Libyans accused of bombing Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988.

Algeria

(Continued on page 10)

trial printing company for higher pay struck a new blow at the press, affecting 25 dailies and weeklies.

The printers, demanding higher pay, have been in fruitless negotiations with authorities since October.

Algeria's press became one of the most lively in the Arab World after riots against one-party Marxist rule in 1988 led to a brief flowering of democratic reforms.

Beidh mounts diplomatic drive

(Continued from page 1)

There was no confirmation from the north.

The Amman accord on decentralisation, as demanded by the south, was aimed at ending a political crisis between Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beidh that threatened the unity of the country.

Despite unity, the two armies have not merged — although northern units have been sent south and vice versa — and tension has grown with troop build-ups along the former frontier.

The situation has become "explosive," with a risk of the fighting spreading across the country, a source close to Defence Minister Haidam Taher Kassem, a southerner, said after the latest clashes.

Four soldiers were killed and 10 wounded in the town of Lawdar, 100 kilometres north-east of Aden on Monday, diplomatic sources said.

Southern troops dispatched as reinforcements from the port of Mukallah fought for several hours with a northern brigade in a battle involving tanks and artillery.

Three other soldiers died Monday when northern forces attacked an administrative building held by southern troops in Zinjibar, 30 kilometres east of Aden, and the capital of Abyan province, the sources said.

Tension flared in Abyan after the president overruled the nomination of a local governor by Prime Minister Haidar Abu Bakr Al Attas, a southerner.

A military commission was

dispatched to Abyan to sort out the dispute between the rival forces but so far the mission has been a failure, the YSP said.

But GPC officials played down reports of tension, saying the situation in Abyan was calm after the commission's intervention with the backing of the U.S. and French embassies.

"The alarming reports from the YSP are designed to camouflage the actions they are taking that are contrary to the reconciliation accord," he charged.

Washington, Paris and Arab capitals have been trying to mediate in a six-month-old feud between Yemen's leaders that has brought the country to the brink of civil war.

Mr. Beidh has suggested that the more populous north is trying to dominate the much larger south.

On Sunday, Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beidh signed a reconciliation charter in Amman, pledging to call army units back to their bases and belatedly begin the combination of northern and southern forces promised in the merger.

But even before the agreement was signed, Mr. Beidh warned that he would not be satisfied until all its points were implemented.

Mr. Saleh and several Arab diplomats have hinted that neighbouring Saudi Arabia upset with the emergence of a democratic state in its backyard, may be encouraging the south to break away.

S. African right set on boycott despite spate of concessions

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — The conservative Freedom Alliance appeared determined Tuesday to boycott the country's first all-race election despite a spate of concessions on its demands for a federal South Africa.

Alliance Chairman Rowan Cronje said increased powers for the country's nine new provinces, approved at a special sitting Monday of the multi-party negotiating council, did not go far enough.

"The powers look more suited to local government," Mr. Cronje said of the latest concessions, which further limited central authority over provincial administrations.

The Alliance — the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), the white right-wing Afrikaner Volksfront and the Bophuthatswana black homeland — says it will boycott the April 26-28 election because it believed the constitution to come into effect after the vote is "fatally flawed."

Ed Tillet, an IFP spokesman, said he would connect only after his party's Central Committee had studied the latest "so-called concessions."

President F.W. de Klerk, meanwhile, was scheduled to meet Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini in Pretoria later Tuesday, the king's spokesman said.

It will be the fourth meeting in five weeks between the two men and the first since King Zwelithini, at a session in Durban on Feb. 14, demanded the restoration of his kingdom in its pre-colonial boundaries.

Mr. De Klerk has been trying to persuade the king, a close ally of IFP leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, to accept the constitutional compromise and encourage his supporters to join the democratic process.

An official announcement Tuesday said South Africa's white-dominated parliament would reconvene in Cape Town next week to enact the latest compromises — despite the Alliance's lukewarm reception — as amendments to the constitution.

A senior member of the parliamentary secretariat said legislators would debate the amendments Monday and Tuesday, with the session possibly lasting through Wednesday.

The compromise was outlined by African National Congress (ANC) President Nelson Mandela last week, and immediately endorsed by Mr. De Klerk.

The negotiating council re-

convened to approve the package, which gives provinces stronger federal guarantees and provides for a double-ballot election system that will allow voters to choose, if they wish, the lists of separate parties for the national and regional parliaments.

The council approved an additional concession to the alliance: An amendment allowing provincial laws to prevail over national legislation and guaranteeing that the central government will not diminish the powers of the provinces.

To allow negotiators extra time to reach agreement, the council also amended the electoral act to extend, until March 4, the already expired Feb. 12 deadline for parties to register for the election.

Chief ANC negotiator Cyril Ramaphosa said Tuesday that the alliance now had no excuse not to participate in the poll.

"We've actually given them an arm and a leg," Mr. Ramaphosa said in a radio interview.

Chief government negotiator Roelf Meyer said after the amendments were approved late Monday that all the demands the alliance had made in December had now

been addressed.

An upsurge in political and criminal violence, in which at least 51 people have died since Saturday, lent urgency to efforts to reach an all-inclusive settlement.

More than 14,000 people have been killed since President De Klerk started to dismantle apartheid in early 1990.

The leader of the pro-apartheid Conservative Party, Ferdi Hartzenberg, said formation of the Volkstaat did not guarantee Afrikaners a white homeland.

"We are not going to take part in the election. It is the most important pressure mechanism we can exercise because if so many peoples don't take part, then it's just another proof that there's no solution," he said in a television interview.

ANC leaders have said they were willing to negotiate with the Conservatives, but have stated there could be no compromise on the basic principles of racial equality and majority rule.

Mr. Buthelezi, leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party and one of the key members of the alliance, reaffirmed at a rally Sunday that he would boycott the election.

Australian spies said to work against Australia

SYDNEY (R) — Australia has rejected calls for an inquiry into allegations its spies worked for Britain's M16 in operations that compromised Australia's interests.

Two unidentified former members of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) told Australian Broadcasting Corporation's Four Corners television programme Monday the service needed to be made accountable for its actions.

The allegations sparked calls for a judicial inquiry into ASIS, an organisation in existence for four decades but only made public in 1977.

"The only way to get to the bottom of the allegations is to have an independent inquiry, preferably of the judicial type," said opposition lawmaker Andrew Peacock.

As Australia's foreign minister between 1975 and 1980, Mr. Peacock was responsible for ASIS.

But Foreign Minister Gareth Evans Tuesday rejected calls for an inquiry. "There's a need to trust the minister with a thing like ASIS," Mr. Evans told a ruling Labour Party caucus meeting Tuesday.

The two spies made a number of allegations in backing their call for more accountability and an inquiry into ASIS.

"These people know that they will never be scrutinised," said one spy who had been trained by Britain's M16 in 1976.

"In a democracy when you have an organisation that is exempt from the law... and never been disciplined you have in effect the beginnings of a thought police," he said.

One of the spies said rivalry between Australian spies and diplomats resulted in an Australian diplomat "blowing" the cover of an Iraqi spy close to President Saddam Hussein who was seeking to defect only months before the Gulf War in 1991.

"His information would have been of critical value to not just Australia, but the entire west," said one of the spies, named Officer 2 on the programme.

He said he believed the Iraqi was killed after an Australian diplomat deliberately revealed his identity on an open telephone line from Delhi to Canberra.

The other Australian spy said a U.S. Central Intelligence Agency officer offered to assassinate an Australian diplomat who had "blown" the Australian's cover in Egypt.

"He was amazed that something like this could happen. He offered... to bring that situation with that official to a pretty rapid termination," said Officer 1.

The two said ASIS spies were sent to Hong Kong and Kuwait to electronically hug business and government offices to help Britain gain a commercial advantage.

French right infights over presidential polls

PARIS (AFP) — French conservative politicians are fighting among themselves to be candidate of the right in presidential elections scheduled for May, 1995, forgetting a pious pledge to unite behind a single leader.

The infighting began in earnest Monday when former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing announced his Union for French Democracy (UDF) would present its own candidate. The centre-right UDF is junior partner to the Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR) that trounced the Socialists in last March's legislative elections.

Mr. Giscard d'Estaing, 68, who did not specifically state he would stand, thus reneged on an agreement with practically all the right-wing parties to hold "primaries" to agree on a single candidate.

Such "primaries" would inevitably have led to selection of a candidate from the RPR, the biggest party in parliament, analysts said, but would have avoided a damaging contest in the first round of the presidential election.

The second round is fought by the two best-placed candidates after elimination of the rest.

But the RPR is also split, with Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, 64, and RPR creator and President Jacques Chirac, 60, bidding to be candidate.

The conflict is not yet in the open, but has been increasingly hinted at by supporters of one or the other, and takes on a new dimension after a sharp fall in Mr. Balladur's popularity, indicating that his exceptional ten-month honeymoon period could be over.

Mr. Balladur remains

EU inches closer to enlargement deal

BRUSSELS (AFP) — European Union (EU) ministers moved a step closer to bringing Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden into the union here Tuesday by making a new offer on development aid.

European affairs ministers offered annual aid of 175 million ECU (\$192 million) to under-developed areas in Finland, Norway and Sweden — 10 per cent less than they had asked.

But the EU ministers were still battling to reach compromise over access to fisheries resources ahead of meetings later Tuesday with their counterparts from the four applicant countries.

Several other problem areas remained after a year of negotiations — notably concerning agricultural prices and Austria's strict limits on polluting truck traffic across the Austrian Alps.

"These are issues which could still stop the talks," a British official warned.

The obstacles involved essentially fish and money, with Spain trying to wring a high entry price from the applicant countries to fund development in the EU's poorest countries.

The EU ministers resumed negotiations Tuesday after breaking up after midnight Monday without agreeing on an overall strategy with which to confront the applicants.

EU officials said Finland and Sweden were closest to reaching a compromise over membership terms, with Austria and Norway posing greater difficulties.

Hosokawa favours 5-party electoral alliance — report

TOKYO (AFP) — Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa has instructed his top aides to consider the possibility of an alliance of five other ruling coalition parties within the lower house, a report said Tuesday.

Mr. Hosokawa gave the instruction earlier this month in a move to eventually unite his Japan New Party (JNP) with Sakigake (Harbinger), Shinseitō (Japan Renewal Party), Buddhist-backed Komeito, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), the Mainichi newspaper said, quoting JNP executives.

Mr. Hosokawa's proposal marks a shift from his previous calls for having a multi-party system in Japan and shows his inclination to have a two-party system, which is also favoured by Shinseitō and Komeito, the Mainichi said.

The Mainichi said in a front-page article that the move was aimed at combatting the largest opposition group, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), at the next elections.

However, the proposal runs counter to the views of Sakigake leader and Chief Cabinet Secretary Masayoshi Takemura, who favours a multi-party system which is also

China, U.K. start talks on Hong Kong defence sites

HONG KONG (AFP) — Chinese and British negotiators Tuesday started another four-day round of negotiations over the future use of Hong Kong's military sites.

Chinese and British experts from the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) set up to oversee the British colony's transition to Chinese rule in 1997, met for four hours Tuesday.

Before the meeting, both team leaders Loo Jiahuan and Alan Paul said they hoped the two sides would soon settle their outstanding differences.

The 14th round of negotiations, which began eight years ago, were expected to cover issues such as the future use of some military sites, and China's request to expand naval facilities to include a military hospital for the Chinese People's Liberation Army — to be built at Hong Kong's expense.

The last bilateral meeting of defence experts was held on Dec. 21-23 but only limited progress was made.

The negotiations have not been affected by Beijing's decision in December to break off talks with London on Hong Kong's political future after Governor Chris Patten introduced an electoral reform bill to the Legislative Council against China's wishes.

On Monday, Jim Morris, deputy secretary for security, told legislators that Chinese troops would be left as little land as possible when the British garrison withdraws.

He said the government wanted to see a large portion of military land handed back for redevelopment to maximise benefits for ordinary people.

Britain has already started withdrawing its troops from Hong Kong.

Meanwhile, Legislators are set to debate and approve Governor Patten's democratic reforms Wednesday, but in the long run, few in Hong Kong believe the changes will matter very much once China takes back the British colony in 1997.

The long-awaited debate of stage one of the reforms which Mr. Patten first put forward 16 months ago — to thunderous outrage from Beijing — is likely to run well into the night.

But political analysts agree that the proposals should go through with few if any changes, despite a threatened motion to defer it in the hopes that Britain and China might still resume talks on the drawn-out issue.

"I don't think it's going to be very dramatic," said respected political scientist Joseph Cheng of City Polytechnic. "In the end, the governor's bill will go through."

Mr. Patten introduced the first part of what he calls "modest" reforms in December, shortly after seven months of Sino-British talks on his original October 1992 proposals broke down in acrimony.

Introduced primarily for municipal-council elections in September, they will lower the minimum voting age from 21 to 18 and enshrine the principle of British-style, one-seat one-vote constituencies.

By splitting the proposals in two, Mr. Patten held out the hope of luring China back to the bargaining table on the thornier second stage that would significantly expand the voting franchise for more important 1995 legislative polls.

Instead, Beijing declared it will simply abolish whatever Britain leaves behind in 1997 and set up a new, but as yet undefined, political system more prone to playing its tunes.

Mr. Patten's cabinet, the Executive Council, Tuesday discussed whether to publish the second-stage reforms as a draft bill as early as this Friday.

China, for its part, has largely abandoned the shrill prop-



The International Atomic Energy Agency Chairman of the Board of Governors Ronald Walker (centre) presides over a meeting to discuss the North Korea nuclear issue. Present with Mr. Walker are General Secretary Hans Blix (left) and Governor Muttusami Sannugaothao (right) (AFP photo)

Seoul optimistic on nuclear inspections

SEOUL (R) — South Korea said Tuesday it was optimistic the Communist North would keep its promise to allow the inspection of seven nuclear sites if the West did not press for further concessions.

North Korea, under potential threat of U.N. sanctions, last week backed down from a year-long refusal and said it would let International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors into plants where the West suspected nuclear arms were being developed.

But Pyongyang's insistence that inspections should be limited to the United States, and a Washington riposte that it would insist on "inspection first, talks later," cooled initial optimism that a breakthrough was imminent.

"The North is worried that the IAEA and the world are demanding more than what it has agreed to," said a senior Seoul government source, who asked not to be identified.

"That is why the North wants talks with the United States together with the inspections," he said.

North Korea's agreement last week with the IAEA does not include two sites that experts say are crucial to determining whether Pyongyang is making atomic bombs.

Gaining access to those sites is supposed to be a focus of senior-level talks between the United States and North Korea that Washington now wants to delay until after the IAEA inspections have started.

Washington has been leading a diplomatic effort to defuse the crisis over Pyongyang's suspected atomic bomb project by wooing North Korea off the nuclear route through promises of diplomatic normalisation and trade links.

The Seoul government source said Pyongyang wanted to ensure the world understood the extent of inspections to which it had agreed and did not want to be pressured about the two additional sites.

In The Name Of The Father wins at Berlin

BERLIN (AP) — "In The Name Of The Father," won best picture honours Monday at the Berlin International Film Festival and Tom Hanks was named best actor for his performance in Philadelphia.

Krzysztof Kieslowski of Poland was named best director for Three Colours: White, the second film in a trilogy loosely based on France's tricolor flag and its message of liberty, fraternity and equality. The Best Actress Award went to Crissy Rock, who in Ladybird, Ladybird, plays a woman who has had four children by different fathers and fights the British social welfare bureaucracy to keep her family together.

The 12-day festival drew more than 10,000 filmmakers, actors, producers, distributors and directors and thousands of fans to see hundreds of movies, of which 22 were in competition. The festival, in its 44th year, is touted by its organisers as the "working" festival that provides fertile ground for lots of deal-making and a special showcase for the often brooding, melancholy films coming out of Eastern Europe. The film winning the top prize, or Golden Bear, was directed by Jim Sheridan, a Dubliner whose first feature film, My Left Foot, was also based on a true story and also starred Daniel Day-Lewis. In The Name Of The Father has already been nominated for an Academy Award and Sheridan for a best director Oscar. The Golden Bear could also boost Oscar chances for Hanks, whose portrayal of an AIDS-stricken lawyer waging a court battle to keep his job in Jonathan Demme's Philadelphia earned him a best actor nomination. The runner-up for best film, or Silver Bear, was won by The Year Of The Dog, by Russia's Semyon Aranovich for its "outstanding portrayal of personal fates in contemporary Russia." A special jury prize was awarded to Strawberry And Chocolate, a Cuban-Mexican-Spanish film about loyalty and disillusion directed by Tomas Gutierrez Alea and Juan Carlos Tabio. "All the decisions were pretty much unanimous," British producer Jeremy Thomas, the jury chairman, told reporters. "No blood was spilled."

6,000 students injected with fake vaccine

BEIJING (AFP) — Police in China's central Shaanxi province have arrested two doctors who injected nearly 6,000 university students with a fake hepatitis vaccine, the China Daily reported Tuesday. Sun Shujuan, head of Shaanxi Teachers' Institute Hospital, and Cheng Mingjie, head of Shaanxi Epidemic Prevention Station, injected the vaccine into 5,851 local students, the report said. Other reports said Dr. Sun had bought the ineffective vaccine at a knock-down rate of 14 yuan (\$1.6) per capsule from Ma Hongliang in the northeastern city of Changchun and charged 18 yuan per shot to students at the beginning of the new term at Shaanxi universities. He made a profit of 10,200 yuan, according to the China Education News. None of the students had suffered any adverse side-effects thanks to precautionary measures taken to protect their health once the scam was uncovered, the report said.

Trial sought for Jose Carreras in Italy

ROME (R) — Italian prosecutors Monday sought a trial for Spanish tenor Jose Carreras and 22 others following a probe into alleged overspending at Rome's loss-making opera. State television said Rome prosecutor Pier Filippo Laviani wanted Carreras, one of the world's most famous tenors, to be tried on allegations he overcharged for performances at the Rome Opera in 1992. The request for a trial must be approved by senior magistrates. Mr. Laviani alleges Carreras submitted claims in excess of his agreed fee of 30 million lire (\$17,640) and travel expenses of 10 million lire (\$5,882). Italian news agencies added, a Rome judge will rule on March 14 whether Carreras and his co-defendants, who include director of the Rome Opera Gian Paolo Cresci, should be committed for trial. Mr. Cresci, at the centre of the investigation into the opera's finances, stepped down Monday after Rome Mayor Francesco Rutelli demanded he resign.

Admiral steers Spurs to NBA best record

MINNEAPOLIS (R) — David Robinson scored an NBA season-high 50 points late Monday and Dale Ellis added 20 to lead the San Antonio Spurs to a 114-89 win over the Timberwolves.

The admiral, as Robinson, a graduate of the U.S. naval academy is known, steered San Antonio to a franchise record 15th straight win as the Spurs reached the season mark to 34-14 — best in the league.

Robinson celebrated being named player of the week for his heroics of the previous seven days by shooting 18-of-32 from the field and 13-of-15 from the free throw line.

Minnesota led 53-52 with 9:30 to play in the third quarter, but the Spurs outscored the Timberwolves 17-2 to take the lead 69-55 and never looked back.

San Antonio's Dennis Rodman collected 20 rebounds. Isaiah Rider scored 25 points, while Doug West and Chris Smith each scored 15 points in a losing cause. Minnesota's Christian Laettner sat out due to a one-game suspension stemming from an incident during Sunday's practice.

Coach Sidney Lowe kicked Laettner out of practice following a heated exchange between the second-year player and assistant coach Bob

Weinbauer. At Utah, Karl Malone scored 23 points and John Stockton added 22 to lift the Jazz to a 119-92 win over the road-weary Philadelphia 76ers, losers of their fifth straight on a five-game swing through the western conference.

The Jazz led 21-19 with 4:25 left in the first quarter, then went on a 10-0 run to close the period, opening a 31-19 advantage that gave them firm control of the game.

The win enabled the Jazz to keep pace with the first-place Spurs in the midwest division. The third-place Jazz remained five games behind San Antonio, with the second-place Houston Rockets — idle Monday — one game out of the lead.

In Chicago, Scottie Pippen scored 30 points, grabbed 12 rebounds and keyed a game-opening run as the Bulls charged by the Charlotte Hornets and back into the win column 118-93.

The Bulls scored the first 10 points of the game, led by Pippen's six, and were never headed. The victory snapped Chicago's longest losing streak of the season at three games.

In Phoenix, Charles Barkley scored 23 points and Dan Majerle sparked a third-quarter

surge to help the Suns defeat the Sacramento Kings 112-86.

Dan Majerle scored 13 of his 21 points in the third for the Suns, who carried a scant 51-49 lead into the third quarter before outscoring Sacramento 39-18.

In Detroit, Jamal Mashburn scored 11 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter to power the Dallas Mavericks to their first road win in over 11 years over the Detroit Pistons, a 98-88 triumph.

The win was only the seventh of the season for Dallas and was the Mavericks' first in Detroit in 10 tries dating back to Dec. 12, 1982. Mashburn scored six of his 11 fourth-quarter points in an 8-0 Dallas run late in the quarter.

In Miami, Glen Rice scored 29 points and Rony Seikaly added 24 as the Heat routed the skidding, injury-riddled Washington Bullets 128-98.

Miami moved a game over the .500 mark by improving to 26-25, while the Bullets lost for the 10th time in 12 games.

The Bullets played without rookie guard Calbert Cheaney, who injured his left heel in a loss to the Nets Sunday.

Don MacLean led Washington with 18 points.

Steve Smith contributed 21 points and 10 assists for the Heat, who led wire to wire.

Harding-Kerrigan turn into sideshow — for the moment

HAMAR, Norway (R) — The Tonya Harding-Nancy Kerrigan main event becomes the sideshow Wednesday as women's figure skating itself finally takes its rightful place under the Olympic spotlight.

For seven weeks the world at large has been obsessed by the incessant furor stemming from the attack on Kerrigan during the U.S. championships in Detroit Jan. 6.

Was Harding involved? She insists not. Would she compete? The U.S. Olympic Committee eventually said yes.

Would she bug Kerrigan? Fat chance. Would a knee injury force her out? No way. All of that gets thrust aside as the two Americans and 25 other hopefuls set out in pursuit of perfect combination jumps and error-free skating in the demanding and punitive technical programme Wednesday night.

The dark-haired Kerrigan with the toothpaste-add smile has practised well in Hamar since recovering from the knee bruising inflicted on her by the man wielding the metal rod in Detroit.

Kerrigan, 24, has also lost weight but she is looking even more the sleek, stylish skater

who is likely to be among the leaders Wednesday.

A bronze medalist in the 1992 Olympics and a silver in that year's worlds mask the fact that her free skating at both events left much to be desired.

At last year's Prague worlds, it disintegrated completely as she slipped from first to fifth with a display which was only ninth best on the day.

But a season of double and triple run-throughs of her programmes has added consistency to her flowing, balletic style.

Harding, 23, is less predictable. At her best, she is a powerful, dynamic skater but her best has not been seen much lately.

Her ankle, sprained Dec. 24 and re-injured two weeks ago, troubles her and there has been pain in practice.

But treatment has rendered it stable and doctors said Tuesday it should not affect her ability to perform.

Oksana Baiul of Ukraine comes to the competition as the world champion and if anything she is even more artistic than she was as a mere 15-year-old winning so endearingly on her first attempt in Prague.

LILLEHAMMER, Norway (AP) — Norway's Bjorn Dahlie missed his sixth career gold medal by four-tenths of a second Tuesday as Italy's cross-country relay team scored the most dramatic upset of the Lillehammer Games.

Jens Weissflog — at 29 a hoary veteran in an Olympic sport recently dominated by Finnish boy wonders — won his second gold of the games, leading Germany to victory in team ski jumping.

It was Weissflog's third career gold, counting the solo medal won on the big hill Sunday and the individual medal captured 10 years ago at Sarajevo where he competed for East Germany.

With five days of competition left, the surprisingly strong Italians were in third place in the medals race — behind Russia and host Norway. The Russians had 19 overall, including nine gold.

The gold won in team ski jumping was the Germans' fifth and put them in fourth place, with 13 medals overall.

Tuesday's two short-track speedskating races could bring new countries into Lillehammer's medal standings. South Korean Kim Ki-Hoon is back to defend his 1992 gold in the 1,000-metre men's race.

Favoured China missed its chance for gold last time in the women's 3,000-metre relay when its anchor fell with only metres to go in the semifinals.

Dueling Dahlie in the nip-tuck anchor leg of the men's 40-kilometre cross-country relay, Italy's Silvio Fauner quick-stepped into the lead with slightly more than a kilometre left. The 26-year-old Dahlie, a double gold medalist in these games, put on his famous kick nearing the finish line but could not overtake his 25-year-old Italian rival.

"I wanted to stay behind him and have an opportunity to pass him in the last 50 metres... but he's so fast I had no chance," said Dahlie.

Norway, the defending champion, had to settle for silver. Finland took bronze.

Tuesday's victory was sweet revenge for the Italians who were runners up to the Norwegians in the 1992 Albertville Games and in last year's world Nordic ski championships.

It was Italy's second cross-country gold and second upset victory on the Birkebeineren cross-country course. A week ago, Manuela Di Centa beat the Russian favourite, Lyubov Egorova, in the women's 15-kilometre cross-country.

Dahlie had hoped Tuesday to join Egorova and Soviet speedskater Lydia Skoblikova as the only six-time Olympic champions. Egorova won three golds at Albertville two years ago and three more here in Lillehammer. Her sixth came Monday in the women's 20-kilometre relay. Skoblikova competed in the 1960 and 1964 games.

Dahlie will have another chance at gold in Saturday's 50K, in which he is defending champion.

"I'll give it a good try," he said. Though the race may have been bad news for Norway, Dahlie saw it as a plus for cross-country skiing.

"I think we disappointed four million Norwegians today... maybe some of them broke their TVs," the Norwegian national hero said. "But we did our best... made good entertainment. It was good promotion for cross-country skiing. I think."

Nordic skiing is the Norwegian national sport, and a record crowd estimated at 110,000 turned out here for Tuesday's relay.

"Dahlie, Dahlie, Dahlie," the Norwegian fans had

chanted as he began the final 10-kilometre leg. But Norwegian cheers and cowbells fell silent as Fauner crossed the finish line a long stride ahead of Dahlie on the frigid, sun-splashed course.

"We were able to shut them up," said Marco Albarello, Italy's No. 2 racer.

"I had the psychological upper hand," Fauner said. "I have beaten him twice before in head-to-head."

"Honestly beaten. There is nothing more to be said," said Vegard "the Viking" Ulvang, Dahlie's teammate and fellow triple gold medalist in 1992. For Ulvang, Norway's No. 2 racer, the relay silver was his first of these games.

At the big hill towering above this town of 23,000, Weissflog proclaimed Tuesday "the greatest day ever for German ski jumping."

On his second jump, Weissflog set a hill record of 135.5 metres. Up to that point, Japan appeared to have clinched its first gold medal of the games. But the last Japanese jumper, Masahiko Harada, wiped out his team's wide lead by only reaching 97.5 metres after jumps of 135 and 133 by teammates.

After landing short, Harada clutched his head in despair, but his teammates rushed to console him.

"I was very unhappy. Harada said, 'But they came to me and told me that we had won the silver and that it was a good result.'"

The bronze medal went to Austria.

Defending champion Finland only managed fifth place Tuesday. Led by then 16-year-old Tony Nieminen, Finland took the individual and team big hill events at Albertville. A has-been at 18, Nieminen failed to make his country's team for the Lillehammer Games.

Russian team head blasts judging at figure skating

LILLEHAMMER (AP) — The head of the Russian team Monday called some of the judging at the Olympic figure skating "crazy" and asked the republics of the former Soviet Union to return to "civilised relations."

Singling out Ukrainian judging, Russia's team leader Valentin Sych said the political tensions between the two were reflected in the scoring for Russia's skaters.

"The psychological situation is such that if a Swede wins, that is perfectly all right. But if a Russian wins, then the Ukrainian says, well it's a Russian," and judges accordingly, Sych complained at a news conference.

"That seems to be a typical reaction from the former republics," he said though an interpreter. After competing as the Soviet Union until the 1988 games, the former republics formed a united team for the 1992 Olympics. In Lillehammer they are competing as separate teams under their own flags.

Sych said his criticism wasn't limited to figure skating judges, but he didn't specify any other sports.

In ice dancing, Russian journalists noted, the Ukrainian judge placed Russians Oksana Grischuk and Yevgeny Platov fourth in the original dance, pushing them into third place overall going into Monday evening's free dance.

Ukraine also stood alone with Britain in giving Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean a perfect 6.0 for their technical programme.

"I got together with the Ukrainians and talked to them and said 'Let's sit down and be reasonable and stop this crazy way of behavior,'" said Sych.

Relations have been tense between Russia and Ukraine ever since the Soviet breakup.

"We can understand certain tensions, but the athletes certainly cannot," said Sych.

"We should turn the page and create civilised relations between us and them," he said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Table tennis world champion to retire

SEOUL (R) — World singles champion Hyun Jung-Hwa said Tuesday she would retire from competition next month and become a trainer. "I have been playing for 14 years now and I am quite sad about retiring. But I have done my best and have no regrets," Hyun told a news conference. "I will continue studying and after retiring next month, I will become a trainer," she said. Coach Chung Kwang-Ho said Hyun's retirement was a great loss for South Korea. "She was the best. We wish she would stay on but we respect her wishes," the coach said. Hyun won the singles title at the world championships in Sweden last year, beating Taiwan's Chen Jing in the final. The 24-year-old Hyun also won the women's world doubles title in 1987 with Yang Young-Ja and the mixed doubles crown in 1989 with Yoo Nam-Kyu.

Mayor: Lillehammer should host 2010 games

LILLEHAMMER (R) — Lillehammer should apply to host the Winter Olympics again in the year 2010, the town's mayor and deputy mayor said Tuesday. "This would be the best after-use of the Olympic arenas," mayor Audun Tron said, backed by deputy Odd Arve Lien. Lillehammer organisers have been widely praised for the games so far, held in sparkling winter weather. If the International Olympic Committee (IOC) ever decided to cut back on new hosts, Lillehammer could become one of a select group of towns hosting future games, they said. St. Moritz in Switzerland, Lake Placid in the United States and Austria's Innsbruck have all hosted the winter games twice.

Olympic flame barbecue news to the police

LILLEHAMMER, Norway (AP) — Word has it that people have been using the Olympic flame at the ski jump above Lillehammer for clandestine cookouts. "A good story," said Olympic police spokesman Alf Andersen. "But it's nonsense." The story has surfaced repeatedly in Norwegian media. "We have looked into it, without finding anyone who could confirm it. There were supposedly pictures of it out there somewhere, but we haven't seen them. They don't exist," said Andersen. Anyone wanting to singe a hot dog in the sacred flame now would need a ladder, stilts or a roasting stick that is about 25 metres long, said Roger Andresen, another police spokesman. He said the flame holder is more than 20 metres tall, and that the stairway used by Norway's Crown Prince Haakon to light the flame was removed shortly after the Feb. 12 opening ceremony. "If someone did use the flame to cook, the military guards on duty did not report it, the police did not report it and no one seems to have seen it," he said.

QPR chief denies sale rumours

LONDON (AFP) — Queens Park Rangers chairman Richard Thompson has denied rumours that he is about to sell the English Premiership for £15 million. The rumours arose after manager Gerry Francis revealed that his offer to stay as manager of QPR for one more year had been turned down by Thompson. But Thompson, the premier league's youngest chairman at 29, branded the rumours about the club's future ownership as speculation. "Fears for its stability are entirely groundless," he added. "I've committed an increasing amount of my time to the club in order to make it successful both on and off the field. I intend to continue those improvements in the future and that includes those to the stadium and our staff," he said. "I've been waiting for Gerry to decide if he wishes to commit himself to QPR, or perhaps even leave football, something he told us and our fans was a possibility when he first became manager and has since reiterated to the press," he added.

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'King Koss' turns down statue offer

LILLEHAMMER (R) — Norwegian hero Johann Olav Koss has turned down a government offer to erect a statue of him in the Viking ship speed skating arena where he won three Olympic golds and smashed three world records.

"A statue of me? Give me the money instead to Olympic aid," he said after completing the historic hat-trick Sunday.

"King Koss" himself gave a \$30,000 victory bonus to Olympic aid, a charity helping war victims in Sarajevo.

Norway's Culture Minister Asne Kleveland proposed putting up a statue of Koss beside one of Hjalmar Andersen, 70, reversed in Norway as the king of speedskating after winning three golds in the 1952 Oslo Games.

Kleveland said the government would reconsider its plans after Koss' refusal.

"Of course we won't do something that Johan Olav Koss doesn't like. We just wanted to mark the fact that we now have two great skating kings in Norway," she said.

Koss was swamped by superlatives after shattering his own 10,000 metres world record by almost 13 seconds Sunday. The daily Dagbladet dubbed him "superman" on its front page.

"He is not like us. He is from another planet," Dutch rival Rintje Ritsma said.

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					CONCORD "1" No Where To Run Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		AMMOUN THEATRE Jabal Luweibdeh, Sayegh Commercial Centre Coming soon: The grand opening of the theatre	presents a play entitled: Al Iim Nuron A popular political comedy Actors: Abeer Issa, Daoud Jalajel, Hassan Al Shaer, Fuad Shomali in addition to other comedians Every night at 8:15 Tickets are sold all day	Nabil and Hisham Theatre presents Ahlan Arab Summit Conference (play) daily at 9:15 p.m. Theatre is closed Sundays, Mondays and Tuesdays
	GHOST Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 8:30, 10:30		COVER GIRL Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		CONCORD "2" The Rookie Shows: 12:30, 3:00 Arabic play "Hi America" at 8:30				

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israeli secret service uses minors as agents

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel's Shin Beth secret service can recruit minors without telling their parents, in exceptional cases, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has told parliament. "In certain rare and exceptional cases, minors can be recruited by the Shin Beth to prevent violent acts which threaten human life," Mr. Rabin said in a written response to a parliamentary question. "The Shin Beth does not go to the parents to take authorisation when it is using agents," added Mr. Rabin who is directly responsible for the General Security Service (Shin Beth). The question from Deputy Eliezer Zandberg of the Tsomet Party followed a report in the Yediot Aharanot newspaper that a 16-year-old boy had infiltrated the anti-Arab Kach movement. He reported back on Jewish extremism centred on the settlement of Kyriat Arba, near the West Bank town of Hebron. Mr. Rabin did not mention if Palestinian minors were recruited by the Shin Beth whose intelligence operations centre on Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation and counter-espionage.

Former rival to Assad freed after 25 years

AMMAN (AFP) — A one-time rival of Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, General Ahmad Al Suwaydani, has been freed after spending 25 years in jail, a former inmate said here Tuesday. Mujali Nasrawin, a Jordanian who used to be a member of the Baath Party which ruled Syria and Iraq, told AFP that Mr. Suwaydani was freed on Monday for health reasons. He himself released from a Syrian jail last year after 22 years. Mr. Nasrawin had called Suwaydani on Damascus to free Mr. Suwaydani, expressing fears he might die in Mazzei prison after having suffered an attack of hemiplegia. Mr. Suwaydani was army chief-of-staff on the side of Salah Jadid, whose Baath Party faction clashed with Mr. Assad's in the late 1960s. At that time Mr. Assad was air force chief under President Nureddin Al Atassi. In 1968, Mr. Assad overthrew Atassi to take power. Atassi was freed in April 1992 and died last December in a Paris hospital, while Jadid died last August in a Damascus jail. Some 20 political prisoners have been in jail in Syria for more than 20 years, most of them arrested during Mr. Assad's coup, according to international human rights groups.

Military burial in Israel without a rabbi

TEL AVIV (AFP) — For the first time since Israel was founded in 1948, a Jewish soldier has been buried with full military honours without a religious ceremony led by a rabbi. Leading secular campaigner Shulamit Aloni, minister of communications and head of the left-wing Meretz Party, declared a victory in the struggle against "religious coercion." The parents of soldier Oded Rabinovitch, who died in a road accident on Saturday, are both Meretz activists and decided to tackle the religious establishment to respect their son's wishes. He was buried on Monday in a Jerusalem cemetery at a funeral attended by his comrades in arms but no rabbi was present. A relative recited the Jewish prayer for the dead, the Kaddish. "Everyone has the right to choose the type of ceremony the wants at burial," Ms. Aloni said Tuesday. "That is a part of religious freedom. Those who are religious should not try to impose their views on the rest of society."

Israel frees seven Lebanese fishermen

TYRE, Lebanon (R) — The Israeli navy has freed seven Lebanese fishermen whom it seized off the coast of South Lebanon, security sources said Tuesday. They said Israeli officers interrogated the fishermen, who were detained on Monday from three small boats off the port city of Tyre, before setting them free several hours later. It was the second time in one week that the Israeli navy has detained fishermen off Tyre. Five were held for several hours by the Israelis on Feb. 15 but freed after being interrogated. The Israeli navy regularly patrols the coast off South Lebanon to guard against seaborne commando attacks by Palestinian and Lebanese guerrillas.

Sudan leader appoints ministers in states

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan's head of state Omar Hassan Al-Bashir has completed a reorganisation of his country by decreeing the appointment of 143 ministers in the 26 states he created earlier this month. Last week he appointed the governors of the 26 states. The appointments, published in a decree read out on state television on Monday night, appear to be aimed at promoting unity in Sudan, gripped by civil war between the north and south. Last week General Bashir broke with the tradition when he appointed a southern Sudanese as governor of one of the 16 states in the north. On Monday Gen. Bashir decreed the appointment of nine Southern Sudanese ministers in the north and nine northern Sudanese ministers in the south.

Parliament approves Mirsalim nomination

NICOSIA (R) — Iran's parliament on Tuesday gave a vote of confidence to the new Islamic Guidance Minister Mostafa Mirsalim, the official Iranian news agency IRNA said. It said out of 224 deputies at the parliamentary session, 178 voted for, 27 against and 19 abstained. Mr. Mirsalim was named as culture and Islamic guidance minister by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani last week in a cabinet change prompted by the sacking of Mr. Rafsanjani's brother from the top job at state radio and television. A French-educated engineer, Mr. Mirsalim, 47, was made adviser to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei — now Iran's supreme leader — during his time as president from 1981 to 1989. The guidance ministry's responsibilities range from overseas Islamic publicity to supervising the print media and cinema, tourism and arranging the annual pilgrimage to Mecca.

Indonesians launch anti-American demonstration

JAKARTA (AFP) — Up to 2,000 Muslim youths staged an anti-American demonstration in front of the U.S. embassy here Tuesday, accusing it of involvement in drug trafficking and of anti-Muslim policies. "We demand an apology from the U.S. government over the involvement of its two diplomatic staff in the crime of drug trafficking," said members of the group, which claims to belong to the Front for Indonesian Youths Saviour. One leader, haranguing the crowd through a megaphone, said the United States was influencing Indonesian youth with what he called a destructive culture, was unfair towards the Muslim World and was always forcing its interests on others. "America, out... America, AIDS... America, narcotics..." the crowd yelled, as well as calling for the hanging of the two embassy staff. The crowd, which according to police estimates numbered 2,000 people, delivered a statement to the U.S. embassy. The embassy's spokesman was not available for comment.

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Kidnap creates backlash against Afghan refugees

ISLAMABAD (Agencies) — Afghan refugees, long welcome in Pakistan, may soon find their numbers limited and their movements restricted, a government official said Tuesday.

Interior Secretary Jamshed Burki's warning came amid increasing anti-Afghan sentiment brought on by the kidnapping of some 70 schoolboys by three gunmen from Afghanistan. The gunmen were killed by commandos Monday night in Islamabad after a 40-hour ordeal, and the boys were unharmed.

But the incident struck a raw nerve. Many Pakistanis said they were fed up with the two million Afghan refugees, some of whom arrived from their war-torn homeland more than a decade ago.

Qamar Abbas, a member of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's party, demanded the Afghans be expelled.

"We gave them shelter for 14 years and this is how they pay us back? They kidnap our children," he said.

The kidnappers brought the schoolboys to Islamabad on Sunday after hijacking their bus in the northwestern city of Peshawar, the area where most of the Afghan refugees live. While the hostage crisis was still unfolding Monday, there were anti-Afghan demonstrations in Peshawar.

Mr. Burki told a news conference that the government was reconsidering its policy which allows the refugees to

roam freely in the North-West Frontier Province, the territory that borders Afghanistan.

he said security had been tightened at refugee camps and acknowledged the anger many Pakistanis feel towards the Afghans.

"Temper was already high after the hijacking," he said. "If God forbid, any harm would have come to the students it could have been explosive."

Mr. Burki said the government had no plans to forcibly expel Afghan refugees, but the government will encourage repatriation and has made clear that it no longer intends to take in new arrivals.

The mountainous Pakistan-Afghanistan border has never been tightly controlled, and tribesmen have long crossed back and forth freely.

Mr. Burki also said the three bus hijackers were trained guerrillas who claimed they had an Afghan organisation behind them.

Mr. Burki, who during the 40-hour hostage drama had conducted three bouts of negotiations, said the gunmen told him: "We are not alone. We have an organisation behind us."

The Pakistani government is "very much concerned to find out who is behind them," he told the news conference.

The exact identity of the Farsi-speaking Afghans from northern Afghanistan's Par-



Officials inspect the bodies of three Afghan gunmen after they were shot dead during an operation by Pakistani commandos Monday. The gunmen were holding six Pakistani schoolchildren hostage in the Afghan embassy, after hijacking their bus (AFP photo)

wan and Bamian provinces was not yet known, but their behaviour showed they were trained guerrillas.

The position the Afghans adopted during the talks and the way they toted their weapons indicated they were "tactically trained," Mr. Burki said.

The 12 elite army commandos carried out their mission against the three Afghans with "great precision," he said. The remaining hostages were rescued "safe and sound," and the hijackers were killed.

Officials decided to go with the rescue operation when it became apparent that the fatigued hijackers, carrying pistols and hand grenades, were likely to resort to "some desperate action which could endanger the lives of the children," he said.

Afghan Ambassador Sardar Mohammad Roshand was "taken into confidence" before the operation was launched, he added.

The interior secretary added that the main obstacle to an agreement with the hijackers was their demand for \$5 million and several government officials as "substitute hostages."

The gunmen had insisted that Pakistan provide them with a helicopter, so they could return to Afghanistan with the government officials.

They also demanded that Pakistan provide food supplies to famine-threatened Kabul, the Afghan capital, and ensure the food convoys' safe passage through territory controlled by Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

COLUMN

Yeltsin returns to Kremlin

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin made his first public appearance here in a week Tuesday, meeting President Askar Akayev of Kyrgyzstan who is on an official visit. They discussed the situation of Russians in Kyrgyzstan and bilateral economic and trade relations, a statement from Yeltsin's office said. Mr. Yeltsin, officially unwell with a cold, virtually disappeared from view on Feb. 3 when he got back from a brief stay in Georgia. He has been staying at Zavidovo, 30 kilometres (50 miles) from the capital, and emerged only on Feb. 15 to discuss the Bosnian crisis with British Prime Minister John Major.

Rome hospital probed over illegal traffic of corneas

ROME (AFP) — Police investigating a Rome hospital suspected of illegally trafficking in corneas have exhumed the bodies of four people whose eyes were removed and replaced with glass eyes, officials said here Tuesday. The judge handling the investigation, Stefano Meschini, ordered that the bodies be exhumed Monday after employees at the San Camillo Hospital revealed the illegal cornea traffic. Officials said a preliminary examination of the victims showed that their corneas had been surgically removed but hospital records do not indicate that such operations were performed. Investigators are trying to determine where the glass eyes were manufactured and whether the hospital purchased them. Some of those targeted by the investigation include the head of the ophthalmology department at San Camillo, Giancarlo Falcinelli, his assistant Gregorio Baragi, the head of the Anatomical Department Giovanni Mascioli and a technical official, Giancarlo Maurizi.

1st woman qualifies as pilot on navy ships

NORFOLK, Virginia (AFP) — Lieutenant Shannon Workman has qualified as the navy's first woman to pilot fighter jets from aircraft carriers, navy officials said. Lt. Workman, 26, took her qualifying flight Saturday aboard the Norfolk-based carrier Dwight D. Eisenhower. She was the only woman among 73 aviators to qualify for carrier operations last week. "It was a great feeling to finally be done," Lt. Workman said after the history-making flight. The Eisenhower is also due to receive its first women crew members beginning in March, a navy spokesman said. An estimated 500 women will take their place among the Eisenhower's 6,000-member crew this year, according to a law passed last year allowing women aboard combat ships and aircraft. Two other U.S. aircraft carriers will also take on women crew members this year, the spokesman said. For more than 15 years, women had only been allowed to serve on navy supply and fuel ships, and were excluded from ships and aircraft designed for combat.

U.K. gays pledge more protests after consent vote

LONDON (R) — Enraged gay activists who tried to storm parliament after British lawmakers rejected a bid to reduce the age of consent for homosexual men from 21 to 16 warned Tuesday of more "big and angry protests." They pledged to keep up the fight for equality with heterosexuals and lesbians and promised to take their case to the European court of human rights. "Democracy is not a license to persecute minorities," gay activist Peter Tatchell said after parliament narrowly rejected legislation set between homosexual men at the age of 16 and voted overwhelmingly to opt for 18 as a compromise. Police had to slam shut the big oak doors of parliament after 6,000 demonstrators holding a vigil outside shouted "scum" and "shame on you" and some tried to climb the building. Lawmakers were trapped inside as the protesters yelled "burn it down" and hurled bottles and placards at the door. Three men were arrested and a police officer injured in the fracas.

Lebanon moves to curb rocket attacks on Israel

BEIRUT (AP) — Top government and military officials met Tuesday to plug security loopholes in South Lebanon that have pushed Israeli troops and resistance fighters to the brink of a new confrontation.

The meeting at the suburban Baabda palace was chaired by President Elias Hrawi, Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, Defence Minister Mohsen Dalloul, Interior Minister Bishara Merhej and Lebanese and Syrian military officers attended.

As the session was under way, Israeli troops punched out of their self-proclaimed "security zone" in the south to comb forests and suspected guerrilla trails about one kilometre north of Zommaraya, the main gateway into the enclave.

Security sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said about 20 troops were involved in the operation, which was followed by an artillery barrage on villages facing the zone. No casualties were reported.

Government officials said the Baabda meeting focused on measures to curb cross-border rocket barrages on Israel and restrict guerrilla activity to the Israeli-occupied border enclave.

"We shall not approve any (guerrilla) operation that touches on the state's responsibility in South Lebanon," Mr. Merhej told reporters after the nearly three-hour meeting.

Latest killing alarms French in Algeria

ALGIERS (Agencies) — The slaying of first former French colonist in an insurgency sent shock waves Tuesday through the community's tiny remnants, which had been spared attacks that have killed 28 foreigners.

Meanwhile, a printers strike kept most of Algeria's newspapers off the stands, striking a new blow to a press already suffering from censorship and the murder of journalists.

The killing Monday of Joaquin Grau, 52, at his bookshop in Algiers was the insurgency's first of a former colonist still living here since French ruled ended in 1962.

Known as "pieds noirs," or black feet, the ex-colonists have been torn between keeping a low profile and trying to lead normal lives since gunmen started killing foreigners last year.

"This is the first warning that's been directly addressed at us," said a retired pied noir, on condition of anonymity.

Gratu was the 28th foreigner, and the sixth French citizen, to be killed in an apparent attempt by radicals to undermine foreign investment in the vital oil and gas industry and overthrow the military-backed regime.

Once numbering about one million, most of the pieds noirs returned to France as the

International watchdog sees Jordan press still under curbs

By Sa'eda Kilani

Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — Despite tangible progress brought on by the democratisation process and its influence on the freedom of the press, the current Press and Publication Law is still the source of worry to international public freedoms advocates who are interested in Jordan and in the region.

The International Centre Against Censorship, Article 19, has just sent a representative to Amman, and his report is likely to include calls for further revisions of the law to combat what his organisation considers as basic violations of the freedom of expression.

Article 19 reckons that the positive steps adopted by Jordan to promote public freedom might witness regression if they are not accompanied with political and legal guarantees. Its representative in the Middle East and North Africa Sa'eda Essoulaumi told the Jordan Times upon ending a week-long visit earlier this month.

"The road has been opened but people don't know how to use it," said Mr. Essoulaumi, a Moroccan who has lived and worked in France and Britain, where Article 19 is based, for several years. "The government is not explaining enough what the people should be doing."

According to Mr. Essoulaumi, the responsibility of raising people's awareness of their rights and stepping up efforts to promote public freedoms should be shouldered also by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and human rights groups in the country. He pointed to the lack of publications on this issue which "are direly needed at this stage."

He said that journalists and writers should raise the banner of freedoms and step up campaigns to enhance democratic practices in the country. Their first role, Mr. Essoulaumi insisted, should be primarily targeted at changing certain provisions in the Press and Publications Law that are in flagrant violation of international human rights conventions and laws.

According to Mr. Essoulaumi, the law enacted in May

1993, was not sufficiently discussed nor was it given ample time for proper revision. He pointed to the many restrictions imposed by the law on the work of journalists and on the press in general saying that another comprehensive and detailed revision of the legislation is a prerequisite to a genuinely free press.

In his assessment, the Press and Publications Law was enacted at the wrong time. On the one hand, people were not fully ready for such a piece of legislation and the Parliament was overloaded with debating and passing other laws "which rendered proper discussion of all of the law's provisions impossible."

"The law emerged in particular circumstances that no body was ready for and where the Parliament was overloaded with laws to be amended," he said.

On the other hand, the absence of guarantees (political and legal), the lack of encouragement and the weight of the past (marital law) were charging the atmosphere with frustration at the time the law was passed, and that was the main source of inertia felt by journalists, preventing them from lobbying for their rights, he said.

"They didn't understand the proper role of journalism as a watchdog and as a fourth estate," he added. "They just looked at the past and compared it with the little freedom they achieved this time around."

Despite the emergence of the two new daily privately-owned newspapers (Al Aswaq and Akher Khabar) as well as partisan newspapers, Mr. Essoulaumi pointed out that the government still owns the majority of shares in the three daily newspapers (Al Rai, Al Dustour and Sawt Al Shaabi). The new law stipulates the reduction of the government's share in these newspapers to at least 30 per cent in two years after the enactment of the law. He also pointed out that the state still administers broadcast media, the radio and television networks.

Moreover, there are still the main "violations" of freedom of expression that "li-

imited category of journalists tried to defend (at the time of the discussion of the law by the two Houses) but failed," he said. "Among these were: article 5 which lists a series of prohibited or restricted subjects "that can be considered as the most undemocratic aspects of the law... under these headings, the censor has the authority to interfere in any subject," Mr. Essoulaumi said.

The list of violations of press freedoms according to Article 19 ground rules also include the definition of a "journalist" which, in the original text proposed by the government, was: "any person who meets the conditions for membership in the journalists' association or chooses journalism as a profession."

At present, the law limits the definition of a journalist to a person who is a member of the association. "This is a grave violation of one of the most fundamental rights of human being: their right to join or not to join associations."

"The only criteria that should be taken into account here is the professional one and not the financial or political or whatever," Mr. Essoulaumi insisted. "Newspaper editors should be the ones who decide who to employ."

Article 5d which forces the journalist to reveal their sources of information to a court of law; article 7 which guarantees that officials and non-officials facilitate the task of journalists is not obliging. The financial restrictions imposed on the publication of newspapers are all considered by Article 19 as binding elements on the work of journalists and on the freedom of the press.

"people have the right to publish whatever they want, financial and political considerations must not be the issue," he said.

Mr. Essoulaumi insisted that all of these articles, which are inconsistent with press freedom, should be amended, otherwise, "the fear of saying you are different will always linger... this fear has to be killed because press is the avant-garde of the democratic process in all countries."

Policeman killed in south Egypt

ASSIUT, Egypt (AP) — Suspected Muslim militants shot and killed a policeman on Tuesday in southern Egypt, the third in as many days, security officials said.

The attackers in all cases escaped, they said.

The latest victim was identified as Atef Hassan Fahmy, a policeman assigned to intelligence work, according to a statement issued by the Interior Ministry.

Fahmy was shot dead as he travelled from home to work on a motorbike in the city of Assiut, 320 kilometres south

of Cairo, the statement said. Late Monday, suspected Muslim extremists shot at the traffic police station in nearby Dairut, killing a warrant officer and seriously wounding a soldier, security officials said.

A day earlier, a plainclothes policeman was killed in the town of Al Badari.

Assiut province has been a hotbed of activity by extremists of the Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah (Islamic Group).

The group has waged a campaign of violence for two years to try to overthrow Egypt's secular government. It has

been blamed for most of the 14 fatal attacks on policemen this year, mainly in southern Egypt. It claimed responsibility for the Badari death.

On Tuesday, the group's warning for bank depositors to withdraw their savings from government-owned banks expired.

There were no reports of runs on the banks.

The extremists contend that the banks' payment of interest violates Islamic law and has told depositors that their savings indirectly support the government.

(Continued on page 5)